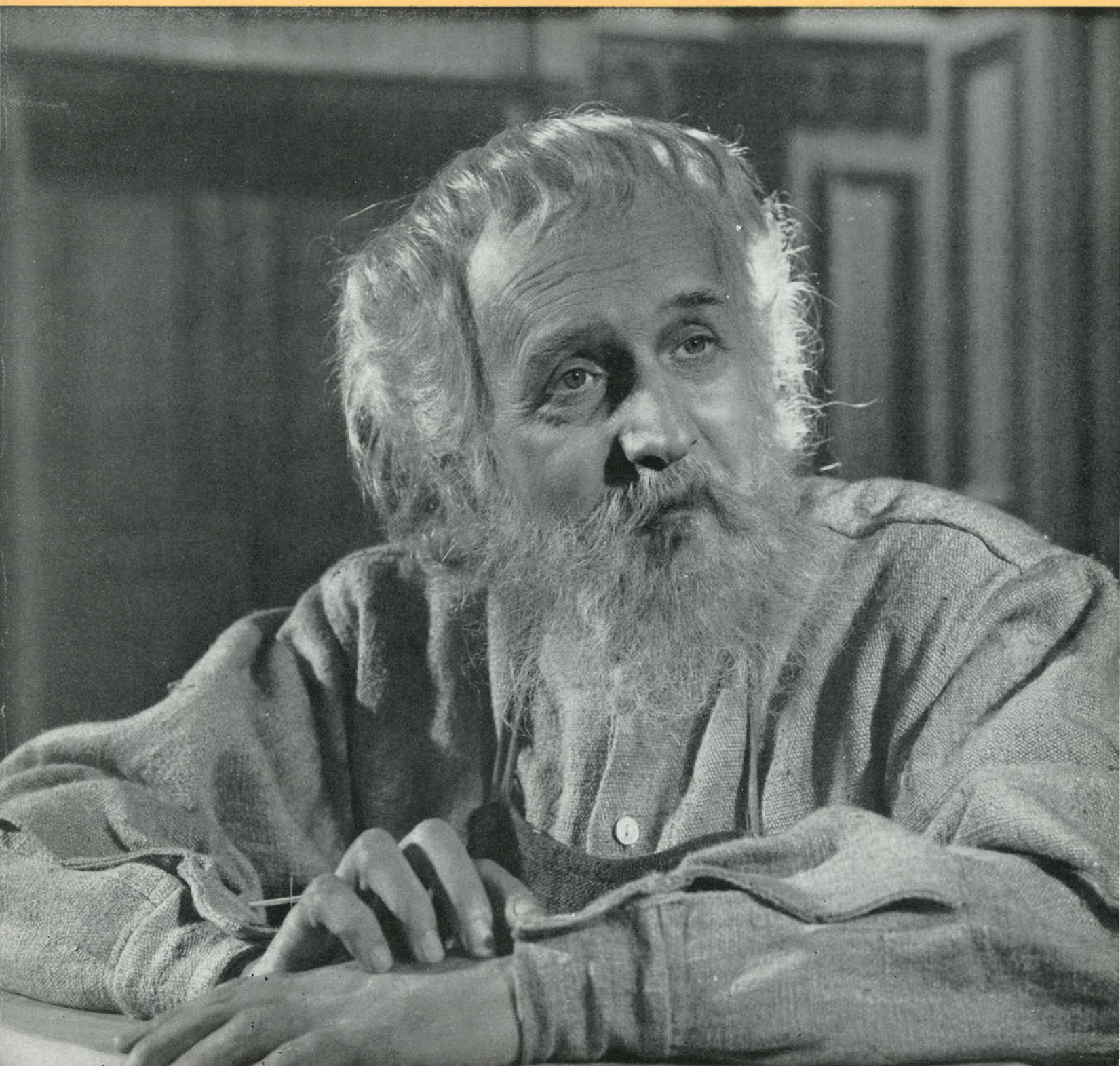


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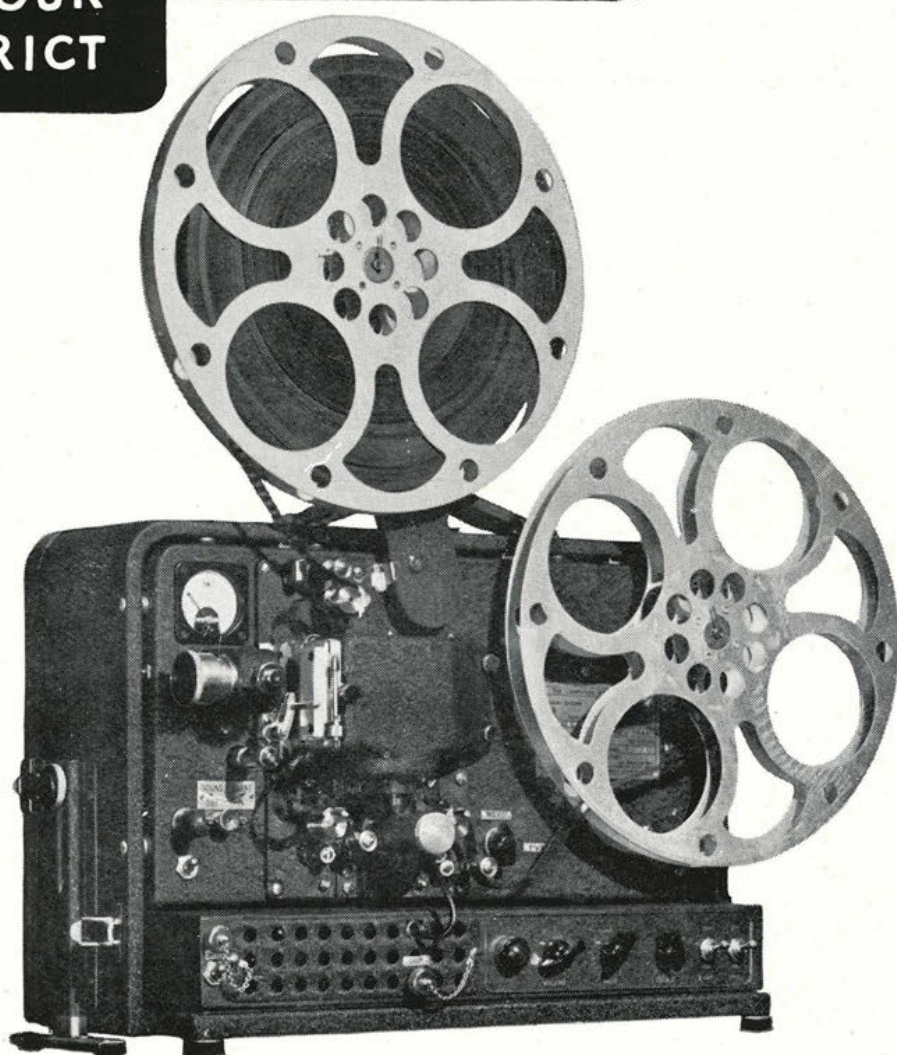
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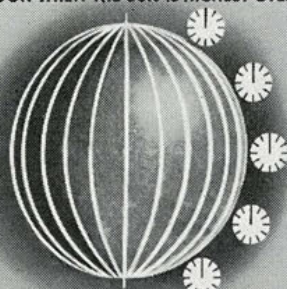
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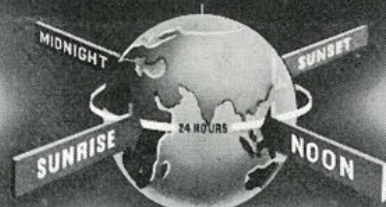


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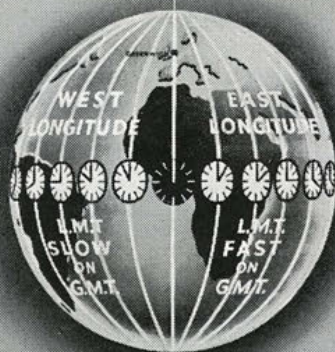
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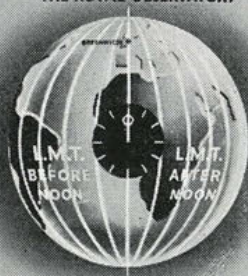
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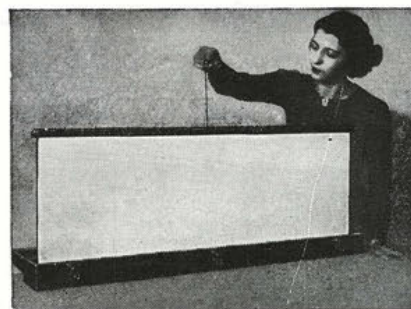
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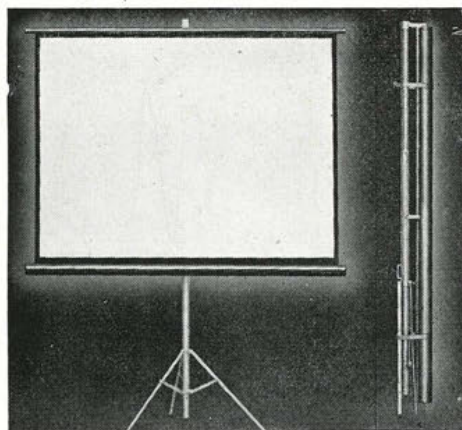
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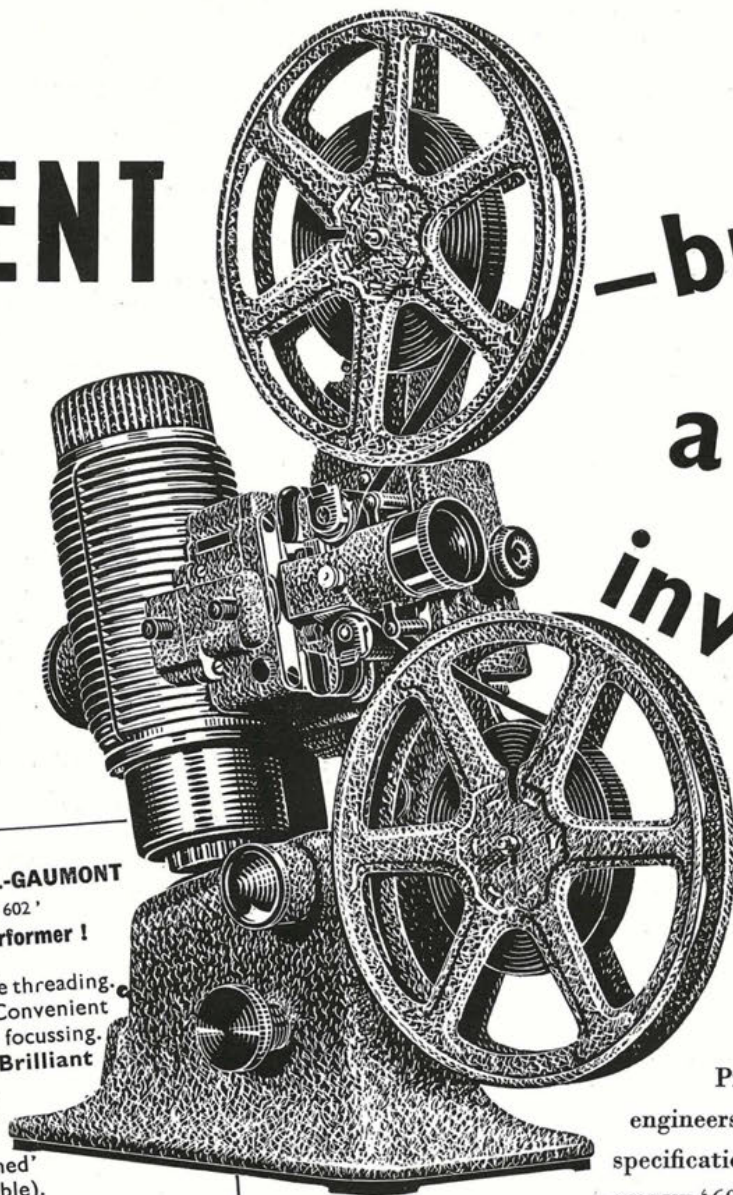
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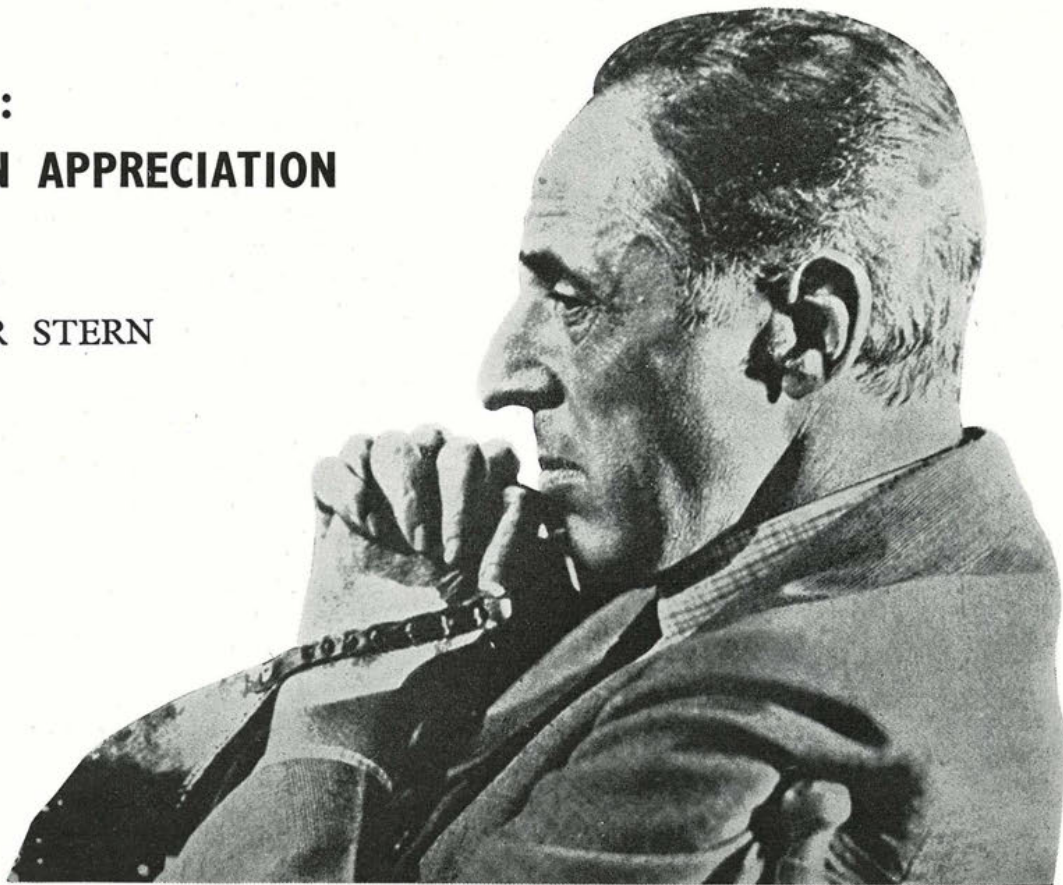
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D. W. GRIFFITH : AN APPRECIATION

By
SEYMOUR STERN



AMID THE WELTER OF DATES, names, facts, figures and astronomical statistics on the films of David Wark Griffith, which have been flooding the nation's (American) press since the "Father of film art" died on July 23rd, little or nothing has yet been said of the meaning of it all.

Is the story of Griffith merely the fabulous chronicle of a director who made 484 movies, which grossed \$80,000,000, and one of whose films alone (*The Birth of a Nation*) earned over \$48,000,000; a producer who employed in some twenty-three years of film-making upwards of 75,000 persons; who discovered, trained and launched so many directors and so many "stars" that merely to list them is to compile a virtual telephone directory of "Who's Who in Hollywood, To-day and Yesterday"? Is he merely an inventor of cinematic and technical devices, the master of his cameramen and technicians, the gifted but old-time pioneer of the movies as an art, an entertainment and an industry?

As the director's vast and fantastic story unfolds, the one central and outstanding fact which begins to shape up is the monumental, single-handed fight which Griffith waged for freedom of expression in a medium cursed almost from the start with censorship and control. The director of *The Birth of a Nation*, *Intolerance*, *Hearts of the World*, *Broken Blossoms*, *Way Down East*, *Orphans of the Storm*, *America* and *Isn't Life Wonderful?* can at last be seen in his proper perspective as the one creative figure who fought alone against both financial monopoly and cultural dictatorship.

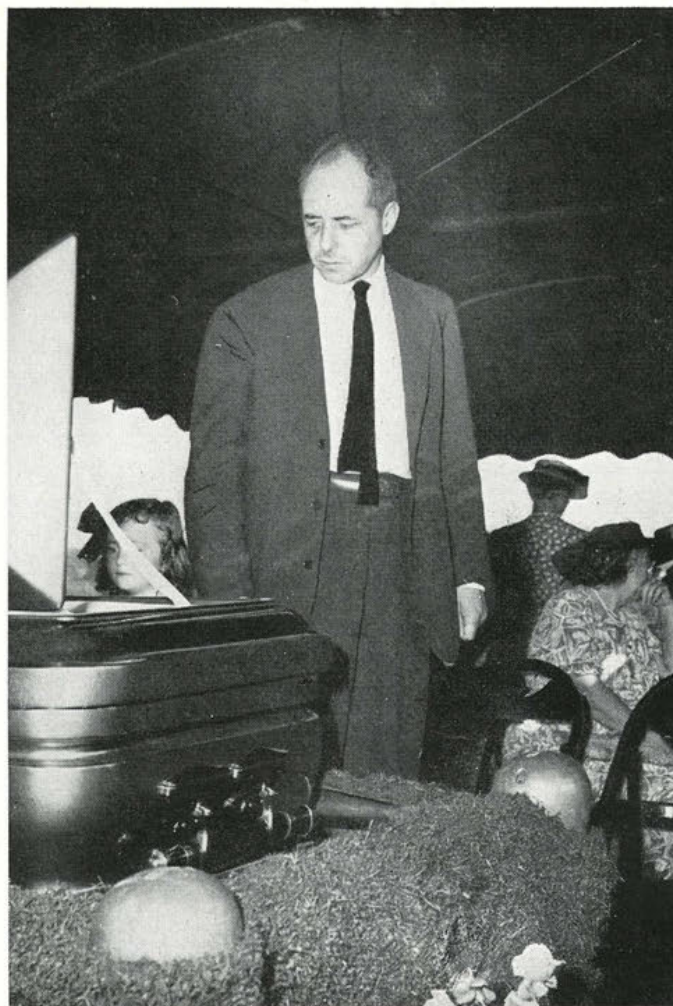
The amazing hysteria which swept all Hollywood after Griffith died—everyone along Hollywood Boulevard, it

appears, suddenly emerged either as a long-lost friend of or an authority on "The Master"—would be a moving spectacle, indeed, if it were not for certain unpleasant facts hard to forget—namely, the fact that all Hollywood let Griffith rot for fifteen years, eschewing the greatness of his vision as it eschewed the plague; that the biggest and probably the most important of his masterpieces, *The Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance*, were financed, produced and exhibited in entire independence of the Hollywood film industry, which refused backing for both films; and that three other major works—*Way Down East*, *Orphans of the Storm* and *America*, were financed and produced independently of the industry and only after they had proved their commercial worth at the initial, first-run showings, did the industry step in and exhibit them.

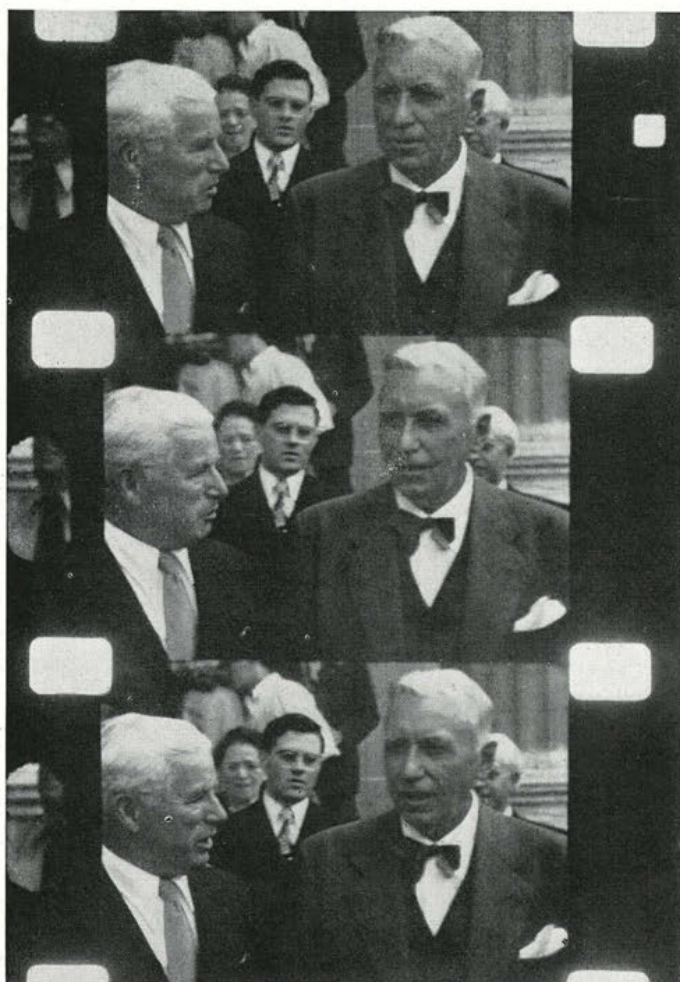
In fact, it cannot well be forgotten that the last three films, not to mention a dozen lesser ones, were not produced in Hollywood at all but at Mamaroneck, New York, three thousand miles removed from the American film capital. They were made, let it be long remembered, without benefit of Hollywood's encouragement, finances or resources. This is especially true of *America*, the largest film made to date in the Eastern part of the United States. In this mastodonic 14-reel production, for which Griffith received grand-scale aid from the government in the shape of regiments, cavalry and artillery pieces, the dean of directors who knew the meaning of "free enterprise", employed a total of 12,000 "extras" over a thirteen-month shooting period, and used as his canvas the backgrounds of seven states up and down the Atlantic seaboard. Not even the equipment came from Hollywood!

At the end of 1924, after he had made a small but extremely powerful film, *Isn't Life Wonderful?* based on the theme of famine and revolution in the Germany of post-World War I, Griffith struck his flag at Mamaroneck: he had gone down before the "industry" after more than five years of strenuous and truly heroic effort to maintain his independence and his integrity. His decline as a free, creative genius begins here, signaled by his affiliation with Paramount. Although he continued making films for eight more years, except perhaps for sequences in *Abraham Lincoln* (1930), none of his later output reflects further of the greatness and originality of the mind that conceived Belshazzar's feast in *Intolerance*, the imagination that fashioned the ride of the Clansmen in *The Birth of a Nation*, or of the cinematic wizardry that flash-cut Paul Revere's ride in *America*. Griffith's films from 1925 to 1931 became increasingly "industry" films, reflecting rather the standardization of Hollywood than the individuality of creative free-enterprise production.

Here, to sum up, are the meaning and also the tragedy of Griffith: he was the greatest creative genius which the new art of the moving picture has thus far brought forth. By an odd stroke of history, he came at the beginning instead of later in the medium's development. Other media offer no parallel to this phenomenon. In literature, for example, before Shakespeare, there was Cervantes;



Seymour Stern at D. W. Griffith's bier (Photo courtesy "Courrier-Journal and Louisville Times")



Mack Sennett and Charles Chaplin leaving funeral—from a film made by Theodore Huff

before Cervantes, there was Dante; before Dante, there were the Greek playwrights and poets. But in the cinema, what was there before Griffith? A few trick shots, invented by the Frenchman, Melies? A few 500-foot trailers, directed by Porter, chiefly at the insistence of the Edison Company and devoid of either cinematic technique or important content? Before Griffith there was nothing. Griffith was the real beginning of the motion picture, owing so little to the few men who preceded him that their very names have been all but forgotten. Yet it was he, not they, who went down before the steamroller advances of the medium he created.

If Hollywood's belated and almost religious adulation of Griffith, now that he is no longer here to enjoy it, leaves a bitter taste in the mouth, there is an antidote for it—one which the father of the motion picture himself, on the eve of the premiere of *Orphans of the Storm*, in 1922, gave out with all the passion and warmth of his famous booming voice. "Yesterday," he said, "was the day of the Warrior. To-day is the day of the Capitalist. To-morrow will be the day of the Thinker".

It is to the cinema of to-morrow that this mighty king of the "realms of Image", to use Goethe's phrase, really belongs.



The Trial

[The New Pabst

Star Film

THE RETURN OF THE AUSTRIAN FILM

By

H. H. WOLLENBERG

IT WAS RECENTLY ANNOUNCED in London that next year a major British picture is to be produced in Vienna. The film's title will be *Elisabeth of Austria*, and its subject the colourful and tragic life story of Francis Joseph's unfortunate, beautiful Empress. She is to be played by Margaret Lockwood, the British star, and the Austrian Willy Forst, one of the best-known directors of the Viennese school of film making, will direct.

The announcement in itself is an indication that, roughly three years after the Nazi collapse and the liberation of Austria, production facilities there, technically as well as artistically, are considered sufficient to justify such an ambitious venture.

In point of fact, post-war developments in Austria appear astonishing in various respects. Above all, it seems surprising that in a comparatively small country of

approximately seven million inhabitants no less than forty full-length features should have been scheduled for production within those three years. A Viennese Weekly, "Die Presse", in a well-informed article pointed out that most of these productions have been completed or even shown; some are in various stages of completion while only five had to be stopped unfinished. All in all, roughly 70 million Austrian shillings have been invested in the forty films. All this seems amazing in an impoverished country, ravaged by warfare and heavily struck by prolonged occupation.

There are, however, different, and less satisfying aspects, too. Of the 70 millions spent in production during the three years at least 40 million shillings have yet to be recovered, according to "Die Presse." What is even more important than the financial aspect, the larger part of the

films made in the first post-war phase of boom were disappointing from the artistic point of view. Most film critics of the very lively Austrian press have made no bones about it; not to speak of severe criticism voiced in other countries, such as Switzerland, where some of the new Austrian pictures have been seen.

No doubt there was a preponderantly speculative element behind many of the newly formed production companies that sprang up so quickly after the war: they meant to cash in on the old reputation of the Austrian cinema, and on the fact that the main competitor, the German film, had virtually disappeared from the international scene. This type of speculative producers (and their backers) still believed in certain outdated formulas, cheap imitations of once successful, original Viennese themes. But the concoction of Vienna waltzes, over-sweetened sentimentalism, equivocal jokes and all the other nauseating ingredients, would not do the trick in a changing world. The hope that all, even the shoddiest, Austrian films had now a unique chance in the far larger German market was soon dispelled: so far, only one agreement has been reached, with the Bi-Zone, providing for the exchange of a maximum of four Austrian for 16 German films.

Yet, it is highly encouraging to see that, inspite of all this, a high degree of optimism exists; an unshakable faith in the valuable contribution Austria has to make to the world's film programme. It is evident in the bustling activities of the film makers, the projects that are ventilated, the plans under discussion or in preparation. And the optimism seems justified by the traditions from which it emanates. What with her age-old achievements in music, literature, the theatre, the arts, Vienna has through the centuries been one of the foremost cultural world centres. In the new field of screencraft, too, she took her rightful place from the early years of the silent film. Its greatest pioneer in Austria was Count Sascha Kolowrat who erected the first film studios in 1910 and passed away in 1927. Other men of vision, such as Josef Somlo, were also instrumental in building up the young, promising Austrian film industry.

Significant is the extraordinarily large proportion of well-known scenarists, musicians, directors and other technicians in Hollywood and elsewhere who originated from the Austrian cinema.

While studios almost all over the world owe so much to emigrated Austrians the modern Viennese cinema (similar to the French, incidentally) found its own style in the early thirties. It is noteworthy that its artistically most fruitful period should roughly coincide with the rise of Nazi-ism in Germany. It was then that the actor-writer-director Willy Forst made his generally admired film *Masquerade* (1934), a picture with a specific Viennese flavour, and some others which put a distinct type of Austrian screen art on the map.

It is to him and some other creative sons that Austria has to look for her film renaissance. It is her greatest asset that they are now at work in the Viennese studios.

There is Karl Hartl who (like Gustav Ncizicky) for many years had devoted his gifts to production in Germany. He directed pictures of a high standard, such as *Berge in Flammen* (Mountains Ablaze, 1931), and other major

UFA films. His first Austrian post-war picture, entitled *Der Engel mit der Posaune* (The Angel with the Trombone), made its bow, and a favourable impression, at the Venice Film Festival this summer. It is a "cavalcade", Austrian version; and its mainstay is Paula Wessely's performance in the principal part. Her art is indissolubly connected with what is best in Austrian production, including Willy Forst's *Masquerade*. An artiste of the stature of an Ingrid Bergman—though with a quite different personality—Wessely has been and is an invaluable asset to the Viennese film.

The other Austrian presentation by which the audience at Venice was impressed was G. W. Pabst's first post-war film *The Trial*. For this Pabst won the prize for best direction. Of the three directors Forst, Hartl and Pabst the latter's name no doubt ranks highest in cinema history. He made his reputation by progressive films like *The Joyless Street* (1925), *Secrets of a Soul* (1926), *Pandora's Box* (1928). His films *Westfront 1918* (1930) and *Kameradschaft* (1931) can still be seen in the programmes of film societies and specialised theatres in this and other countries. Those in the audience who understand the German dialogue will find the pacifist message of these films far more radically expressed than the English sub-titles convey. Small wonder that Pabst left Germany immediately after Hitler's rise to power in 1933. In his Paris exile, he was regarded as one of their most prominent supporters by all political refugees from Nazi persecution. After the fall of France, however, his attitude—to say the least—became the object of strong criticism, and, to many of his old friends, of deep disappointment; he stayed on, remained untouched, and was even allowed to work under the Nazis. Suspicion was bound to rise. Anyway, he has been re-admitted to film making in Austria; and this particular article is not concerned with political controversy but with his directorial work and nothing else.

A picture directed by Georg Wilhelm Pabst can, on all accounts, be sure of considerable interest. And so can the particular subject he chose. It is in fact of a propagandist character, selected apparently with a view to rehabilitating himself and to clearing his position against Nazi-ism and all it stands for.

The film is the dramatic reconstruction of real events, actuated by anti-semitism, which, taking place in the Hungary of the '80s, led to a notorious trial for alleged ritual murder committed by Jews, and culminated in a parliamentary debate in Budapest where the criminal swindle was exposed and the truth brought to light by a progressive, gallant and humane deputy. Ernst Deutsch, the character actor who will be remembered for numerous fine performances in pre-Hitler German films, has his come-back here in the great role of the most endangered synagogue servant at the village of Tisza-Estzlar. He got the award for the best male performance at Venice.

These were a few examples of films creditable to the revived Austrian cinema, films worthy of its past. By placing quality before quantity it will be able to recover its prestige. It has the great advantage in that it can draw on its imposing resources of talent, old and new. By keeping in mind a sense of responsibility towards their fine artistic heritage Austrian films can play a distinguished part in the world, which will readily be acclaimed by the friends of the cinema in all lands.

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

By FRED ZINNEMAN

CRITICS OF *The Search*, the film which depicts the plight of Europe's war orphans, were kind enough to credit its makers with pioneering a different point of perspective from which a screen story can be conceived.

It is, of course, understood that there is nothing essentially new or revolutionary in this approach. It was used with great success by many European film makers—the real pioneers of this approach—such as Rossellini in *Open City*, de Sica in *Shoe Shine* and Lindtberg in *The Last Chance*. It is new only insofar as its application to an American film, destined for the regular American market, is concerned.

Stated in its simplest terms this approach consists of using the raw material of contemporary history in order to make a dramatic document. The important element in such an undertaking is, of course, the fact that the story and its details must be conceived on the spot; second, that the inner truth of the subject matter is of such paramount importance that it must not be sacrificed to ulterior considerations such as star names and conventional treatment.

Our primary concern was *not* to attempt an artistic achievement, but to dramatize contemporary history for the large American audience and to make them understand in emotional terms what the world outside looks like today. We felt that if we could contribute even a small amount to such an understanding, all our efforts would be not in vain.

All of us realized, of course, that it would be necessary to soften the truth to a certain extent, because to show things as they really were would have meant—at least in our sincere opinion—that the American audience would have lost any desire to face it, used as they have been through the years to seeing a sentimentalized world.

Before the start of the enterprise, we—i.e. Mr. Arthur Loew, Mr. Lazar Wechsler and myself—unanimously agreed that the picture was primarily destined for the American market and that it must reach as many people as possible for the reasons stated above, besides the very obvious reason of box office. We were interested in a general acceptance of the film both as a method of educating the large American public to a vital modern problem and also as a money maker. In this sense, *The Search* was a test case, and from recent reports, it appears that the test has been passed successfully.

While it is not too difficult for films in Europe to be extremely successful on their own merit regardless of important box office names, this has been almost impossible up to now in the United States. The American public has been consistently “sold” on looking primarily for star names and personalities. Therefore it is difficult indeed to expect them to go to see a film only because of its inherent value. As everyone knows, some of the great pictures of our time—such as *Open City*, *To Live in Peace*, etc.—are patronized in the United States by a comparatively restricted public.

It was producer Lazar Wechsler who first conceived the idea of making *The Search*. He was familiar with the plight of Europe's “unaccompanied” children. Various people, among them Leopold Lindtberg, the director of *The Last Chance* and *Marie Louise*, and Therese Bonney, the well-known reporter and photographer, who had authored a great book of photographs on Europe's children,

approached him regarding the idea and urged him to develop it.

On a visit to America in 1945, Wechsler became impressed with two things: the innate generosity of Americans and their lack of comprehension of the extent of suffering abroad. He realized, too, that this lack of comprehension had made Europe suspicious of American generosity. He was keenly aware that a motion picture, correctly done, could serve to interpret this problem internationally.

My choice as director for *The Search* came about for a number of reasons. *The Seventh Cross*, with Spencer Tracy, which I had directed, had been quite popular in Europe. Very often, American films dealing with a European locale are severely criticized when shown in Europe, because of an apparent lack of authenticity: we were gratified that *The Seventh Cross* was an exception.

The fact that I speak German was undoubtedly a persuading factor. But I think that my work on *The Wave*, Mexican-made and one of the first successful “documentaries” was a more important case in point.

Mr. Wechsler, Mr. Richard Schweizer, the writer, and I fully agreed on the method to be followed in writing the scenario. We felt that the main thing was to get as much of the elements of the story as possible from first-hand observation; from seeing and studying the locale and talking to a maximum number of people who had been directly involved in the period of history we wanted to portray—veteran UNRRA employees who had been in Germany since the liberation, adult D.P's and “unaccompanied” children. (The term “unaccompanied” in UNRRA parlance means children who have lost their parents and families and who have no one in the world to look after them.)

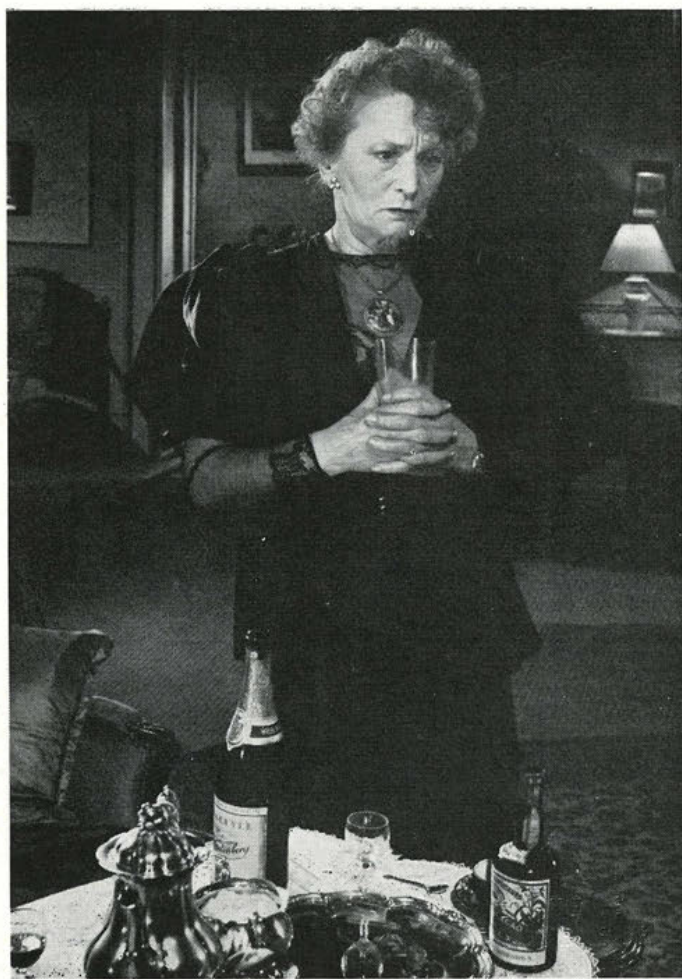
It is heartening, at this juncture, to remember that films like *The Search* are marketable to the public and *can* make money. The picture's box-office record bears out our contention. The Los Angeles showing of the film, for instance, was a near record. Its run of eight weeks at the Four Star Theatre has been bettered by very few films.

It is even more heartening to remember that this type of motion picture need not bring in grosses of four or five million dollars in order to be profitable. There seems to be a close connection between authenticity and economy; the realistic story can be told without help of large studios, expensive stars and elaborate wardrobes.

This approach is not limited in its application. The entire world is—potentially—a stage, and the motion picture is at its best when it provides a kind of common human language.

My future plans are predicated on the idea that this approach may be used successfully, everywhere. As my next picture, I plan to do a story on Palestine. This film will take no sides. Also, I should like to do an American date-line film story of the essential subject matter of *The Search*, presenting the “unaccompanied” children of the United States, those psychological orphans and displaced young people whose maladjustments have created a tremendous national problem of juvenile delinquency.

We will continue to think of the word “box-office” in its larger meaning, as an index of public acceptance. In the beginning, we may have to make certain compromises to bring about this acceptance, for we will always primarily aim at the general American audience. We hope, however, to keep on developing and improving the quality of such films as rapidly as possible.



Mens Porten Var Lukket

Saga

FILMS

IN

DENMARK

By

GERALD COCKSHOTT

THERE IS ONLY ONE *Vredens Dag* and only one Carl Dreyer, but the Danish cinema has been active since the formation of the Nordisk company in 1906. It is said that *Vredens Dag* (the script of which was refused by one company before Palladium accepted it) has failed to recover the modest £12,000 spent on its production; and for six years Dreyer has made no feature films. Most of the pictures produced in Denmark are farces and light comedies designed simply to make money and are of little or no interest outside their own country. The films made by George Schnéevoigt between 1930 and 1932—*Praesten i Vejlbj* (*The Clergyman at Vejlbj*), *Hotel Paradis* and *Kirke og Orgel* (*Church and Organ*) are still spoken of, as are one or two of the farces of 1933-1936—*13 Aar* (*13 Years*) with Marguerite Viby, and *Med fuld Musik* (*With full Orchestra*), one of the many films in which two popular Danish comedians of the silent days appeared: Karl Schenström and Harald Madsen (known in Denmark by abbreviations of their nicknames: Fy and Bi); but most of the films produced between 1933 and 1938 seem to have been obvious farces, melodramas and novelettes. Svend Methling's *Elverhøj* (*Goblins' Hill*) is said, by its slow camera movement, to have some affinity with the work of Dreyer, but, *Vredens Dag* apart, the most notable feature films produced between 1933 and 1947 would seem to be Poul Henningsen's *Danmark* (a box-office failure), Johan Jacobsen's *Otte Akkorder* (*Eight Chords*) and Bodil Ipsen's *Afsporet* (*Derailment*).

I saw four Danish films while I was in Denmark. *Lise kommer til Byen* (*Lise comes to Town*) (Alice O'Fredericks and Lau Lauritzen) is a modest comedy featuring Gerda Gilboe, a leading actress of the operetta stage—about as good as a pre-war British film with Jessie Matthews. *Stot staar den danske Somand* (*Proudly stands the Danish sailor*) (Bodil Ipsen and Lau Lauritzen) concerns the adventures of Danish seamen who joined the allies, and contains just about every cliché of the British wartime naval picture. Most of the effects are splendidly managed; the weakness lies in the script. Grete Frische was responsible for the screen plays of both these films; given a better author the same directors and actors (Poul Reichhardt and Lisbeth Movin play important parts in both films) might well achieve something memorable. Meanwhile *Stot staar den danske Somand* enters its sixth month at the Palladium Cinema in Copenhagen.

Mens Porten var lukket (*While the front door was locked*), Asbjørn Andersen's recent production for Saga, makes no pretensions to cinema: it is dialogue, dialogue all the way. The piece is reminiscent of *Derrière la façade*: one is admitted to the night life in a block of flats, which comprises murder and suicide as well as the more normal nocturnal activities of the human animal. The author shows little originality and the interest of the film lies in the performances of a distinguished cast, which includes Thorkild Roose, the veteran actor at the Royal Theatre who played the part of Absalon Pedersson in *Vredens Dag*, and Berthe Quistgaard, who, at the time of writing, is playing the lead in "The Voice of the Turtle" on the Copenhagen stage. The acting is excellent, especially Karin Nellemose's genial street-walker and above all Clara Pontoppidan's painfully tragic portrait of the old actress who has taken to drink and feels herself driven to suicide, takes poison and too late regrets her action. This is a magnificent portrayal of human degradation and despair; but the actress is badly served by the director, who cuts straight from comedy to a close shot



Kristinus Bergman

Nordisk

of her tortured face and photographs her in attitudes which can only strike the audience as ludicrous.

While I was in Copenhagen about forty of the forty-five cinemas were showing old American films. (During the war Scandinavian films were shown and a German quota was enforced—though most people refused to go to German films.) The odd five were showing pictures from Denmark, France, Great Britain and Sweden, as well as the first post-war German production (*The murderers are amongst us*). Cinema programmes are shorter than in England—a feature, a few advertisements and perhaps an organ interlude. The advertisements are good. One short “puff” for beauty preparations might have been made by Dr. Massingham himself; and two others were simply performances of choral works by Danish composers with the advertiser’s name on the titles fore and aft. Lights were not dimmed and latecomers could find their seats without

difficulty before the feature began. Two of the first-run cinemas I visited compare, for size and comfort, with the Curzon Cinema, Mayfair. The design of the theatres is pleasing and the lighting effects are artistic rather than vulgar. All seats are bookable and a good seat in a “west-end” theatre costs about half a crown. In a suburban cinema (also pleasantly designed and lit) it costs about one and ninepence. The little cinema at Ry in Jutland was most tastefully decorated, but the seats were for Spartans and the lack of organisation was quite incredible. The queue system is not generally followed in Denmark, and I found myself in the midst of a seething mob milling round and round the foyer. Here an interval was made in the middle of the film (a custom in some cinemas on the Continent—and in some countries required by law) but the Copenhagen theatres do not follow this practice. No smoking is allowed.

PART OF THE SIGHT AND SOUND SERVICE

"Personally, I have nothing but admiration for Herbert Wilcox . . . so much so, that I should like to offer him a subject for his next attention. A happy-go-lucky young Duke (Michael Wilding) attires himself in cap and muffler for a bet and plays a barrel organ in Shepherd's Market in the rain. He is compassionated by a pretty passing milliner (Anna Neagle). . . . Further encounters take place, but the cat is let out of the bag when the young Duke attends with his mother at the select millinery establishment in Bruton Street where the girl is employed. . . . All, however, works out happily in the end. The title of this epic, I suggest, should be 'Meeting in Mayfair.' I offer it for nothing in a good cause."

Arthur Vesselo in *SIGHT AND SOUND*, August 1st, 1948.

Anna Neagle and Michael Wilding, the successful team of *Piccadilly Incident*, *The Courtneys of Curzon Street*, and *Spring in Park Lane*, will appear in Herbert Wilcox's forthcoming production, *Maytime in Mayfair*, which is in active preparation. . . .

The story will be set against the background of Mayfair's exclusive fashion dress houses. . . .

"Kinematograph Weekly," August 19th, 1948

One or two good short films from Denmark have been shown by English film societies. Others that are well spoken of are *SE (To see)*, a film about light and the human eye, and *De naade Faergen (They reached the ferry)*, an exciting film about traffic, apparently comparable with the British short *It might be you*. The Danes have produced a cartoon film—*Om Rationalisering (On rationalising work)* by Jørgen Mogensen, one of Denmark's leading comic artists—but it is not said to be outstanding. The important names in the Danish cinema at present seem to be those of Astrid and Bjarne Henning-Jensen who, like their fellow directors Bodil Ipsen (a distinguished actress at the Royal Theatre), Lau Lauritzen and Asbjørn Andersen, are also actors. The Henning-Jensen short films *Brunkul (Brown coal)*, *Sukker (Sugar)*, *Hesten (The Horse)*, and especially *Papir (Paper—*a documentary on saving paper*)* are considered excellent. It is to be hoped that these and their feature films *Ditte Menneskebarn (Ditte, child of the people)* and *De Pokkers Unger (Those blasted kids)*¹, will be publicly shown in England. Meanwhile their latest film, *Kristinus Bergman*, has been awarded a prize of 75,000 Kroner (about £3,750) by the Danish Government. Personally I thought the promise of the first part of the piece was not sustained, and that what begins as a study of human character and relationships degenerates into rather conventional *drame policier*. At first scenes of Bergman's adult life are interspersed with flash-backs (consecutive in time) which explain how the child has been father to the man. Excellent. Then Bergman robs a bank and the police gradually catch up with him. The relationships between the characters are depicted with subtlety: where Asbjørn Andersen overstates, the Henning-Jensens consistently understate; and the excellence of the first part of this film perhaps makes the weaknesses of the last part more obvious than they would be in the work of a lesser director. But *Kristinus Bergman* is good cinema, achieved by a producer with ideas. (There is one delicious scene where Bergman's friend Jakob tiptoes to the maid's bedroom at the hotel, to the accompaniment of Mendelssohn's Wedding March played offscreen by violin and piano—the piano out of tune and the violinist playing wrong notes.)

Nevertheless the chief merit of the film to my mind lies in the acting, which is *film* acting at its best. The flicker of an eyelid here conveys more than lines of dialogue. I have never seen better naturalistic performances than those of Ebbe Rode, Preben Neergaard, Lily Weiding and Lis Løwert; and Olaf Ussing (the Laurentius of *Vredens Dag*) is excellent in a character part.

Several Swedish productions were showing, including *To Kvinder (Two women)*, *Harald Handfaste* ("The Swedish Robin Hood") and Gustaf Edgren's *Driver Dug, falder Regn (When dew falls, rain follows)*². The last seemed to me an ingenuous romantic tale played against magnificent scenery, exquisitely photographed. I was captivated by its visual beauty; but my Danish hosts condemned the piece as false and sentimental. A sentimental Swedish picture is received in Denmark rather as a popular American film is in England: the public flock to see it and the intelligentsia are strongly critical. Familiarity has bred indifference to the superb Swedish photography and fomented irritation at the usual weakness of the Swedish film, the script.

But to return to the Danish film. Just as about ten years ago English critics were agitating for a native British picture, so serious critics in Denmark are advocating that films should be realistic and about the country as it is. There is also a demand for a Danish film academy. Denmark's contribution to the arts is known in England by a handful of films—wrongly, because the achievement of Danish writers, painters and composers is considerable. The Danish cinema relies to a large extent on the theatre. There is no Danish Hollywood and producers must wait till stage actors are free from their other work—which means that many scenes have to be shot at night. Under a good director few film actors are the worse for having had a stage training; but the film that is little more than a photographed play is another matter. Given a new attitude on the part of her producers, and more script-writers and directors like the Henning-Jensens, Denmark's studios may well rival those of any country in the world, for of their technical accomplishment there can be no question.

¹ See *SIGHT AND SOUND*, Autumn, 1947.

² See *SIGHT AND SOUND*, Spring, 1948.



The Great Promise

FILM PRODUCTION IN PALESTINE

By

HERBERT FREEDEN

THE COLONISING ENTERPRISE of Jewish immigrants in Palestine which started off in full force after the first world war, naturally had an urge to record on the screen its feats in soil reclamation, draining of swamps and the establishment of agricultural settlements in the wilderness; on the other hand, to those early pioneers who had to take up the struggle with the desert and to concentrate their resources on finding water, refertilising a soil which had been sterile for centuries, filming must have seemed luxury which they were unable to afford. From these two premises, it transpires that film production in Palestine had been almost exclusively devoted to documentaries, and these documentaries slowly evolved from unorganised

and amateurish beginnings. So, for instance, what was probably to become the first news reel made in Palestine was shot by Mr. Ben Dov in 1917, when he covered the entry into Jerusalem of the British Army under General Allenby.

It was, however, not before 1922 that for the first time a studio was built in Palestine, though of very modest dimensions and still located in Mr. Ben Dov's own house. This development was not possible but for the intervention of what in other countries would have been called "State assistance". The special structure of the Jewish work of colonisation in Palestine had made it necessary to set up instruments of finance which covered practically all

spheres of activities in agricultural and urban life. Two institutions, the Jewish National Fund and the Palestine Foundation Fund, which raise their income through voluntary donations from world Jewry, had to take over functions which are normally carried out by Governments. It was comparatively early that they recognised the importance of the documentary film for conveying the accomplishments of colonisation to audiences outside Palestine. When, in 1925, the Hebrew University was opened on Mount Scopus in the presence of Lord Balfour and dignitaries from all over the world, the event was filmed by several local cameramen, and soon after the first documentary of land reclamation works was made when the drainage of swamps in Haifa Bay and the amelioration of its lands was depicted in a comprehensive story.

Subsidised by the two National Funds, Carmel Films Limited were established in 1927, with Mr. Nathan Axelrod as the director. This Company has since produced sound news reels with Hebrew commentaries for exhibition in Palestine and an English version for abroad, on the average one reel per month. Twenty-five "shorts", mostly of Palestine life and landscape, six Arabic speaking educational films on behalf of the late Mandatory Administration and two recruiting propaganda films during the Second World War, have also been produced. In 1929, an attempt was made to evoke the interest of the big German film organisation UFA, in film production in Palestine but the negotiations failed.

The first artistic venture in a local studio was undertaken in 1934, when the noted photographer, Helmar Lerski made a film with boring for water as its main theme. It was called *Soil*, but the daring and hyper-modern angle of Mr. Lerski's camera failed to impress the masses and the film was a commercial failure. In the same year, the Palestine Foundation Fund produced for the first time a documentary which exceeded the usual running time of twelve to fifteen minutes and which, under the title *Land of Promise*, was widely shown in America, England and on the Continent. The film reviewed the achievements of the settlers in Palestine in all spheres—agriculture and industry, cultural activities and health and social services. The composition of this film indeed moulded the many "shorts" which followed in the later years, produced with the help of the Zionist institutions, such as *A Day in Daganah*, which mirrors the life in one of the foremost pioneering villages; *Homeland in the Making*, a review of the progress made in the country during the last ten years; *Hadassah*, which relates the story of the biggest hospital and medical research centre in the Middle East.

The greater the dimensions which the Jewish tragedy assumed in Hitler Europe, the more stress was laid on the human angle in all descriptive material issued in Palestine. If before the epic of transforming the soil of the country and the soul of its pioneers, who had left their urban pursuits in Europe and become agricultural settlers provided the ever-recurring theme, now the main emphasis shifted to the problem of refugees and their salvation from Nazi persecution. Among a number of shorts which depicted this situation are *Home are the Hunted*, telling the story of the absorption in Palestine of Jewish fugitives and D.P.'s from Europe; *Look Homeward Wanderers*, showing how some of the remnants of European Jewry began their lives anew in the Holy Land; *Land of Hope*, starting in Hitler's concentration camps and accompanying some of the survivors to the shores of Palestine, and *Road to*

Liberty, relating the story of the Jewish Brigade which went out from Palestine, took part in the fighting in North Africa and Italy and witnessed later the liberation of some of the Jewish survivors in the extermination camps.

Almost all films produced in Palestine were meant for distribution abroad as the Palestine market itself is too small to make a local production profitable. There are 55 cinemas in the country with an estimated seating capacity of 41,000, of which approximately 40 theatres are in the Jewish sector. It was due to the necessity of competing with the technically far superior products of the American and European industry that, in 1947, a fully-equipped studio with modern apparatus for shooting, sound recording, developing and editing, was set up in Jerusalem. A South African, Mr. Norman Lourie, launched the Studio under the name of "Palestine Film Productions" and has since then produced three documentaries. One, *The House in the Desert*, is centred at the Jewish settlement on the Dead Sea, Beth Haarava, and shows the alliance between science and labour in making even this most salty soil flourish; the second, *Room for All*, deals with the economic and immigration potential of the country; and the third is the story of one of Palestine's great valleys where agricultural progress has made its longest stride, *And They Shall Hear Jezreel*. Mr. Lourie is at present working on a film on Haganah, the Defence Army of the new State of Israel.

Twice in recent years non-Palestinian film companies have displayed their interest in Palestine. In 1946, America's *March of Time* sent some of their cameramen to Palestine. The result, a documentary called *Palestine Problem* was an interesting attempt to bring to the screen what by then had become a burning political problem; and shortly afterwards the British *This Modern Age* series followed with the film *Palestine*, which gave an unbiased account of both Arab and Jewish cases.

In Jewish circles, however, the need was felt to present the Palestine scene through media other than the pure documentary. With all their earnest attempts at recording the developments of the country and, at least as far as the Jewish sector was concerned, of its inhabitants, they failed to penetrate into the big commercial circuits in America and elsewhere and to reach the maximum number of audiences. It was for this reason that immediately after the Second World War, the Jewish National Fund commissioned a film from Mr. Josef Leytes, who was working with the Polish Army Film Unit and has a number of screen successes to his credit, which should transcend the limits of the documentary and combine factual presentation with a human story. This production, which was completed in 1947 in London studios and laboratories, was called *The Great Promise*, and was widely shown in the United Kingdom, South Africa, the European Continent and is now starting its run in the United States. This film consists of three tales which are narrated by Jewish soldiers to refugees in a liberated camp in Europe. One is the story of a volunteer from Palestine who comes home on leave to find that the people of his settlement have come to the help of a neighbouring village which in its fight against the swamp had been overcome by malaria. The other story is that of an orphaned girl who had gone through the horror of the Nazi holocaust and whose mind and heart are slowly healed among her little companions in a children's village. The third one is the tale of the Jordan, symbolical of the

story of that age-old country which renews itself again and again. The cast of the Palestine scenes are all amateurs and lend an air of verity to the film. The drama is heightened by the excellent musical score of Misha Spoliansky.

Shortly after Mr. Leytes' film, Herbert Kline, the producer of the well-known Mexican documentary *The Forgotten Village*, the American journalist Meyer Levin, and the cameraman, Floyd Crosby, went to Palestine to shoot a film which was supposed to go one step further towards screen entertainment and was to use the land and the people, not any more as the object, but as a background. Their feature film *My Father's House*, which was financed by capital raised in Palestine and successfully launched on Broadway, tells the story of a small Jewish boy—the only one in his family to escape extermination in Europe—and a young Jewish woman who has also remained alive, but at the most terrifying price a human being can pay. They meet as they are landed in Palestine—

he in search of a mother and father, and she with the hope of forgetfulness.

The boy's unrelenting search takes him through numerous adventures, both physical and psychological. And it is these very adventures that also serve to re-awaken in the young woman something of the human importance that war and degradation had all but destroyed. They find in each other—and parenthetically in Palestine—a fulfilment of their deepest needs.

The future of Palestine's film industry will, no doubt, to a large extent depend on the outcome of the armed conflict which for the time being is putting a heavy strain on the country's economy. It seems, however, as if the new State of Israel will not miss the opportunity of presenting its case to the world through the media of the screen and, judging from certain initial developments in this direction, it appears as if the documentary may have found a permanent home in Palestine.

LOUISIANA STORY AND MELODY TIME

An American letter from

HERMAN G. WEINBERG

THE MOST NOTABLE EVENT of the Autumn film season is the new Flaherty film, *Louisiana Story*, in which that poet, that Melville of the camera, returns to the lyricism of *Nanook* and *Moana* in a film of perfectly ineffable beauty, the like of which we have not seen since *Man of Aran*, and that was a long time ago. It is interesting to note that Flaherty's perennial theme, man vs. nature, is even maintained here, in a story that ostensibly tells of the effects on the lives of a primitive Accadian family in the swamps of the Louisiana bayous of the discovery of oil on their land. At first glance this would seem to be a *deux à deux* between man and technological progress but the latter is, in the geysers of oil spouting from the bowels of the earth, a force of nature still. Thus does Flaherty answer those of his critics (not the least of which is his idolator, Grierson) who have held that the theme of man vs. nature was almost an anachronism in the modern world of technological progress. Today, *Nanook* has a radio, the boys and girls of Samoa read Hollywood fan magazines and the Aran Islanders belong to trade unions. *The Louisiana Story*, however, from any angle, is no anachronism. Its story is as up to the minute, if you will, as need be, but it is more than that and much more than almost everything else that you will see until the next Flaherty film—a poem, as Jean Renoir has pointed out, with the purity of the old Greek ideal; Keat's "thing of beauty", a film of the sheerest innocence in a world in which everyone is a smart-aleck, knows all the answers, and wouldn't even trust his next footstep, let alone someone else's. *Louisiana Story* is the kind of film that makes you smile inwardly before you realize you are doing this. On the night of the earth's first day, the first man wept with the setting of the

sun. But when he saw that it rose again next morning he smiled—it would then be always like this. That is the kind of smile I mean. It is a rare thing in art; in film it is so rare that there is almost no word for it.

Between *Louisiana Story* and the remaining films of this quarter is an abyss over which there is no bridge. If anything, the abyss is deeper and more desolate than ever, with the death in the last several months of four of the cinema's progenitors—Lubitsch, Eisenstein, Feyder and Griffith. Without them the cinema is left half an orphan, but in the persons of Flaherty, Pudovkin, Chaplin, Clair and the rest of the film hierarchy, it has at least one parent to look after it, though from the amount of "juvenile film delinquency" still rampant in the world you wouldn't think it.

That leaves only *Mr. Peabody and the Mermaid* and *Melody Time*, the new Disney; the former only because it has an enchanting idea, the theme of "autumn fire", i.e., the one last fling at romance in the middle-age of man, before the long, endless night of age's winter descends on him. But the hypocritical morality of Hollywood (or America, I don't know who to blame any more) dissipates this idea into nothingness. Mr. Peabody sheds his mermaid without a qualm and goes back to his wife in an evasive ending that makes one wonder why they chose this theme in the first place. In Pabst's *Atlantis*, the thing that remains with you is the man's stumbling out into the desert sandstorm to find once again the "romance of Atlantis" which he had for a moment experienced. Whether he finds it again or not is beside the point. If he dies trying to find it is almost beside the point, too. That's what makes European love



I Wake Up Dreaming

Samuel Goldwyn-R.K.O. Radio

stories so much more stories of love than their Hollywood counterparts. (Read A. B. Walkley's introduction to *Ariane*, Claude Anet's novelette, for a most lucid exposition of how Hollywood, for all its preoccupation with "the grand passion", really *evades* it). Not that William Powell couldn't play the wistful Mr. Peabody; he could, but he is made to grimace insufferably here. Ann Blyth as the mermaid is, as I have intimated before, lovely. There are many oohs and aahs about *how* lovely Miss Blyth is without a bra, but the movies being the hypocritical medium that they are, we are never vouchsafed a shot of this—it's all right for Mr. Peabody to see her thus but not us. And yet Mr. Peabody is not corrupted by it, he returns to his wife, "better" in fact, than ever. It is a common hypocrisy in the films, and even a director like Clouzot commits it in reverse in *Quai des Orfèvres* when he puts Jouvét behind a screen while Suzy Delair dresses, yet we, the audience, are permitted to see her completely *en déshabille*. On the other hand, Clouzot will let Jouvét inadvertently open a chorus girls' dressing room door (in the same film) and see her practically nude. It's not to be understood. The movies are so confused about the whole matter of sex that they don't know *what* to do any more. For fear of getting their hands slapped they commit the most awful *gaucheries*.

In conclusion, to end on a cheerful note: Walt Disney's *Melody Time* is a delight, though uneven, as such *mélanges*

are bound to be. The first sequence, a winter idyll on the ice, is charming for its stylized drawing in the Currier and Ives spirit; *Trees* is not more than chromo art calendar stuff with occasional flashes of astonishing virtuosity, such as the spider's web caught in the morning dew; the *Samba* sequence lacks only the frenetic voices of Donald Duck and Joe Carioca to be as good as the two were in *Saludos Amigos*; *Johnny Appleseed* is pure American folklore again charmingly drawn in the manner of American primitive painting; *Little Toot* has a delicious parody, towards its close, of music-hall routine; *Bumble Boogie* leaves the spectator breathless in a whirlwind of piling invention on invention until the whole dizzy edifice seems about to topple down on and engulf the spectator in a sea of irresistible rhythms. I reserve *Pecos Bill* for the last for this is one of the high spots of all Disney films and the purest kind of American folk humor we have. Not the *Iliad*, the *Volsung Sagas* or the *Nibelungenlied* were more heroic than the exploits of Pecos Bill, the "rootenest, shootenest cowboy north of the Rio Grande". It glorifies Texas' favorite son in such extravagant terms that I'm told when it was shown there the Texans almost tore up the theatre seats in sheer joy. See it. It does what it sets out to do as completely as anything Chaplin or Dovzhenko ever attempted, or for that matter, Bach or Poussin. Everyone attains Parnassus in his own way.

ERRATUM

The title “*I Wake Up Dreaming*,” caption to illustration on page 120, has, of course, been changed to “*The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*.”

BOGUS BALLYHOO

By

DONALD SUTHERLAND

IT IS A CURIOUS FACT that the quick-witted American has yet to discover how best to publicise his films in Great Britain.

Mr. Jympson Harman, critic of the "Evening News", in a recent passage of arms with an English producer, made the excellent point that American publicity, as employed by the cinema, has yet to emerge from the "barker" and travelling showman stage.

In a truly civilised community the trailer which heralds next week's Hollywood feature would serve very well to keep an audience out rather than to bring them in. But we are conditioned to its blatancy. The technique is admirably adapted to the two-headed calf or to Siamese Twin Mermaids. Superlative is piled upon superlative to a point where words cease to have any meaning at all, and all sense of proportion, let alone values, has been cast to the winds.

Not so long ago a trailer went the rounds which told me that I had had Dante's "Inferno", Milton's "Paradise Lost" and Goethe's "Faust". It went on with trumpets, chords and explosions to say that I should soon have Paul Muni and Claude Rains in something or other. I forget the title, but the film it heralded was no less an insult to the intelligence of the audience than to the capacity of the players.

Miss Elissa Landi, whose name appears more frequently on the spine of a novel than on the hoardings nowadays, was a player of charm and modesty. Only the mind behind the trailer could have described her as "The Flaming Empress of the Screen".

In a country where Senators, Governors and high officers of State readily lend their countenances to almost any publicity stunt thought up by Culver City, this kind of thing may do very well. But not in these islands. When a Territorial officer was hoodwinked into providing a Guard of Honour at Southampton for the first copy of a Hollywood film, public opinion reacted violently against the hoodwinker. It is, *en passant*, strange that an industry so preoccupied with psychiatry and those who practise it should be stone blind and deaf to another nation's psychology.

They have never bothered to moderate the tone of their publicity. It would seem that the press and publicist in the U.S.A. have so bedevilled those upon whom their art is practised that they have ceased to understand the positive or comparative. Over here we are still aware of degrees and values.

It is a symptom that the growing pains of the British film are now of the past when you note the more modest tone it employs.

Taking a page from a Sunday newspaper and looking down the film advertisements, one observes the following:

- (1) The Screen's Mightiest Music Show.
- (2) Greatest Production.
- (3) Edgar Rice Burroughs' Greatest and Latest.
- (4) Significant! Impressive! Exciting!

- (5) Sensational Success!
- (6) New Triumph!
- (7) Supreme Masterpiece in Technicolor!
- (8) The Spirit so willing, The Flesh so weak, The Romance so wonderful!

All the foregoing claims were made on behalf of American films. On the same page *The Brothers, Hue and Cry, Great Expectations, Take my Life* and *Dear Murderer* were advertised without benefit of one single adjective, let alone a superlative, among the lot of them.

Is one to believe that the authors of these extravagant ecomia really imagined that they attract a single customer on the strength of their superlatives? If so they have a very naive view of the British filmgoer.

The trailers scream raucously at you just like the circus barker, women scream, heroes kiss, guns explode . . . but they never quote criticism of the wares they cry.

There was once a firm of publishers who made a point of quoting unfavourable reviews side by side with favourable ones on the jackets of their books and leaving the customer to make up his own mind. Such a policy carried into the trailer could provide a highly entertaining little feature instead of inflicting the noisy nuisance which the filmgoer now suffers.

The gap between West End and general release would make it possible to compose such a trailer.

Deterioration in quality, now increasingly evident in the Hollywood film, has brought with it an increased sensitivity to criticism on the part of the major producing companies. The exclusion of critics has been threatened, lawsuits are in the air and ingenious devices resorted to. Not very long ago a picture took a beating at the hands of the critics and offered a problem to those whose business it was to exploit the thing.

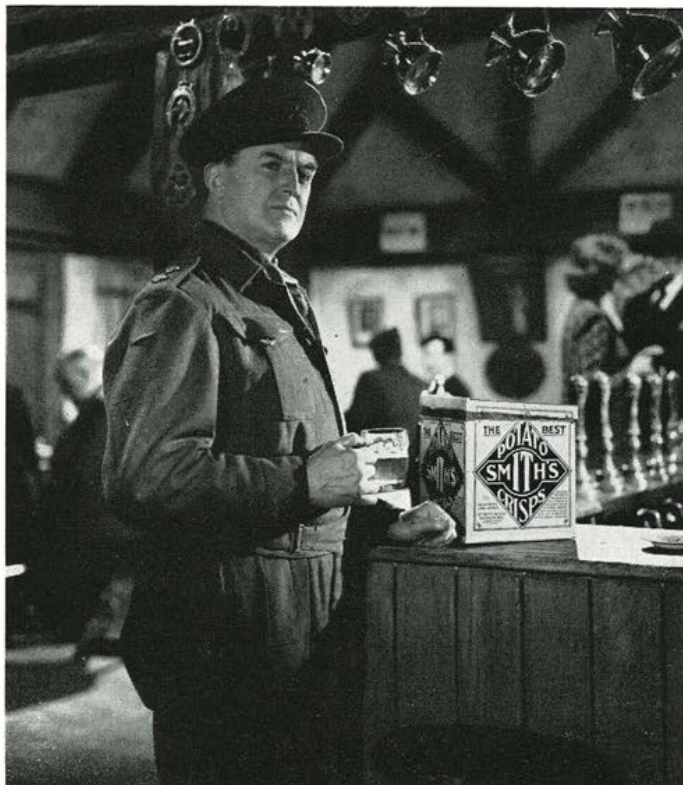
They persuaded a titled Member of Parliament whose religious convictions coincided with those expressed in the picture, to write them a letter in praise of the opus. The letter was photostatted, enlarged and exhibited outside the theatre to the total exclusion of all expert, professional criticism. It was a very ingenious idea. It is even preferable to another practice, all too common, the quotation divorced from its context.

Mr. Paul Jones, critic of the "Sunday Something," sees *Love in Ashes* and reports as follows.

"In this, the millionth version of the Cinderella legend, one finds a honeyed, sickly imbecility informing both story and dialogue, while the acting, as understood by this studio, is a veritable catalogue of cinematic clichés. But the photography, like the Alpine settings, is magnificent".

Splashed over hoardings and billboards, you will read "MAGNIFICENT"—Paul Jones. Sunday Something.

The public is no longer taken in by these *coups de main*. In their own interest, those who are responsible for them should bring them to an end. Although the American Press has kindly compared these islands with Guam and referred to us as their "Atlantic outpost", we are no longer a subject state in the celluloid empire, but a power in our own right. Perhaps in a not so distant future we shall have an American musical (and how good they are) which is *not* "A cataclysmic mirthquake with the most starspangled cast of all time", or a domestic comedy which does not "lay bare the quivering soul of neglected wifedom". And, if they are good pictures, we shall like them none the less.



Against the Wind

THE TIE-UP

COMES OF AGE

By

OSWELL BLAKESTON

THE TIE-UP, which was introduced into the film world as one of the consequences of showmanship, has become a factor in our economic life. It would be hard for anyone who has not looked through the files of the tie-up department in a large film organisation to imagine the amount of ingenuity and care which has been spent in order to make the tie-up respectable.

In essence, the tie-up is an arrangement between a manufacturer and a film company by means of which both parties achieve publicity. As so much money is invested in the film business, it is inevitable that film publicists should search for every possible means to give their expensive products *réclame*. So much is at stake, and not a single member of the potential audience can be neglected; for the astronomical sums of production expenses must be turned into box-office profits if . . . if the film industry is to endure! The publicist, then, who first thought of making a tie-up may be an anonymous figure in the book of cinema history; but he just had to happen.

Some of the basic principles of the first tie-ups are still in use. A film is made of a novel, and the film publicists tie-up with the publishers of the book. When the film is released, arrangements are made for stills from the film to be displayed in the book-shop windows. Publisher and film maker are tied-up to exploit the situation: the book gives publicity to the film, and the film gives publicity to the book. But this is merely tie-up Type A.

Far less obvious fields of exploitation than shop windows and shops are "discovered" by modern publicists. There was a film in which a patent boiler made a story-point in a scrip—a criminal switched off the gas in a house at the

main, but when he turned on the gas once more he forgot to ignite the pilot light of the boiler and spoilt an alibi. Here was a chance for an astute publicist to tie-up with the manufacturers of patent boilers, the manufacturers showing stills from the film (scenes including the boiler) *on their factory notice boards*, and in return for this publicity being offered—*morale for their workers*.

Again, there was a film in which a character wins a bet by throwing three triple twenties on a dart board. The publicists discovered a tie-up of a display of a still of the darts being thrown and the proprietors of public-houses. The still was displayed by dart boards in bars throughout the country: in return for this exceptional publicity, landlords were offered—an excuse to promote interest among their customers in a "Triple Treble Twenty Tournament".

Obviously, these two examples are subtle bargains compared to Type A.

Of course Type A tie-up creates a demand for goods; but to-day tie-ups are planned to create an article of commerce as well as a demand for it. The publicists arranged for a *Corridor of Mirrors* scarf to be designed and printed and offered in modish shops at the time of the release of Edana Romney's picture. It was an attractive scarf, with signed pictures of director, star, producer, cameraman, etc., providing the motif for the design; and it was something which came into being because of the film which supplied the market-interest. The film publicists did more than exploit an existing possibility to achieve extra publicity; they created the possibility by finding a designer and then convincing a manufacturer that it would be a clever move to put the design into production.



It Always Rains On Sunday

"THE TREBLE TWENTY"

Ealing Studios

Another form of the tie-up which creates the article as well as the demand has now become an accepted pattern of commerce: this is the use of stills for jig-saw puzzles. The ingenuity of publicists has also created many an indoor game based on the incidents or theme of a motion picture; and the game has given publicity to the film and the film has aroused interest in the game.

In a wide sense one might speak of the tie-up between British films and British goods. This, indeed, has become a most respected tie-up, one which is readily recognised by economists; and the recognition which has been given to the fact that trade follows the film now plays a big role, apart from the larger one in the economy of the nation, in the economy of the film itself. By means of reputable tie-ups, film producers have been able to reduce the by no means inconsiderable costs of their property departments.

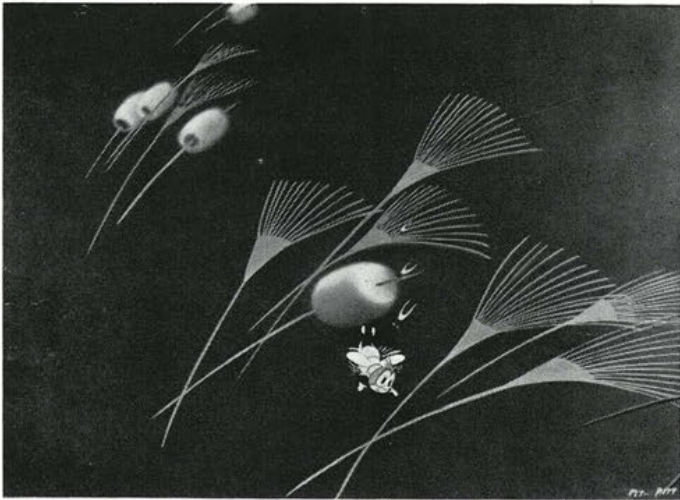
Perhaps the producer wants the loan of an expensive motor car. Instead of hiring the car, the producer can offer the manufacturer an opportunity to show his new model in the film. The tie-up is given an extra knot when the producer supplies the manufacturer with a still of the stars of the film posing with the luxury model—a still which can be displayed in garages to the advantage of the film and the car.

So modern publicists read the scripts of all films which are going into production with the greatest care: they read

the scripts in order to check on the properties. No doubt all the props (from motor cars to cigarette lighters) can be borrowed free, and an effective tie-up arranged at the same time. Even when a property doesn't exist, a manufacturer may be persuaded to think that it is worth getting it made. For instance, Smith's made a period clock for *Oliver Twist*; in return for this courtesy, the still cameraman on the picture photographed Kay Walsh holding the latest model Smith alarm clock. This still was displayed in shops side by side with a still from the film with Kay Walsh and the period clock.

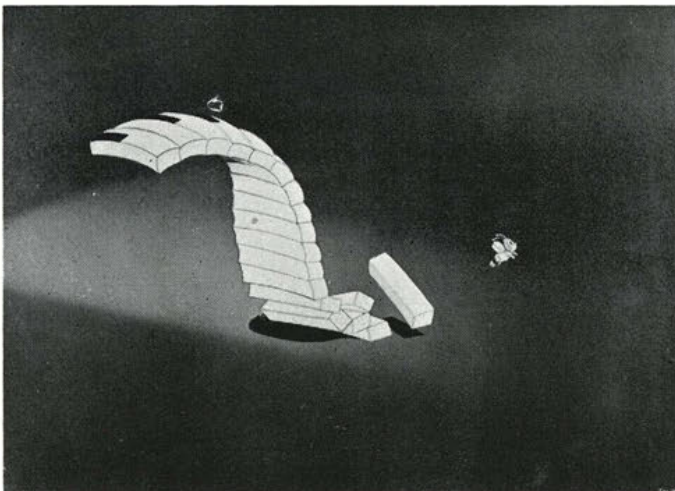
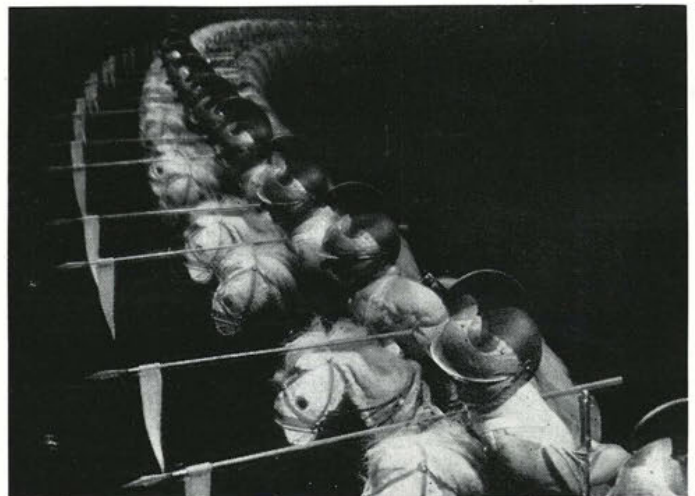
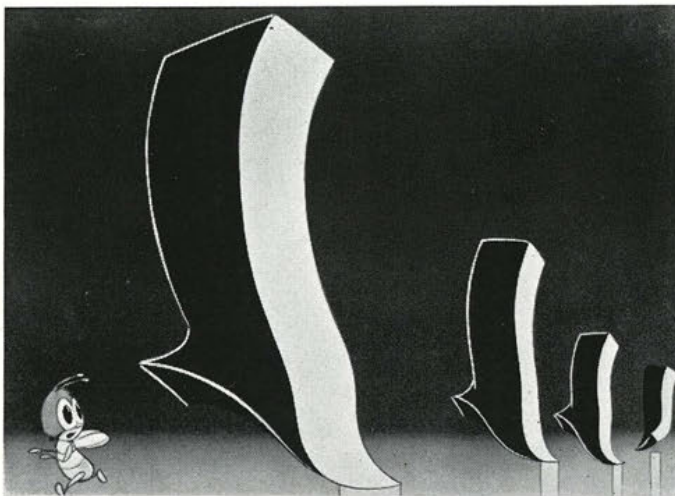
Tie-ups can also help the production-manager to find a saner economy for his dress account. Fashion experts from the film companies cover the dress shows, and arrangements are then made to borrow dresses for the film. Fashion stills, showing the stars in the dresses, are a fine bribe for the modiste who can use them in advertisements. The tie-up may be taken a stage further with the stars themselves opening the costumier's next dress show, on which occasion the film company will be sure to take publicity stills!

Yes, variations on the tie-up have been brought to a fine art by the film publicists, and they form a curious sidelight on the film industry and its economic significance. Whatever we may think of them, they are part of our economy; they are as respectable, and as mysterious, as some new form of entry in some advanced form of book-keeping.



THE TWO WORLDS

Some people like cartoons, some puppets, some the abstract, some the concrete. Some, of course, both. The two methods are contrasted in, on our left, an abstract sequence from Walt Disney's MELODY TIME (R.K.O. Radio) and, on our right, scenes from the Czechoslovak puppet film, SPALICEK



Film Stamps

It is common knowledge that postage stamps of a pictorial character are issued by many countries of the world, but few people are aware of the production of specially designed issues which honour the film industry, and there can be no doubt that the following notes and illustrations of some of these little gummed postal souvenirs will prove of great interest to all connected in any way with the motion picture business.

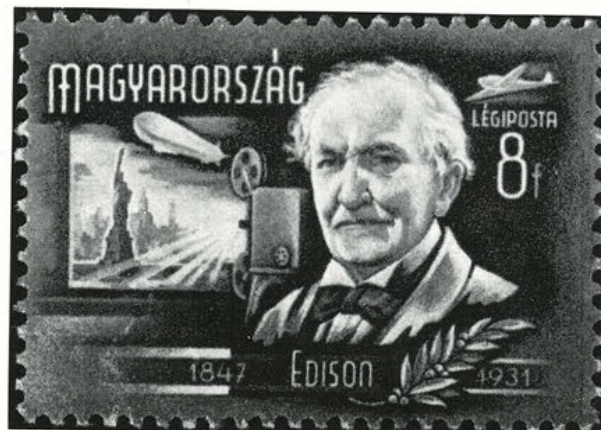
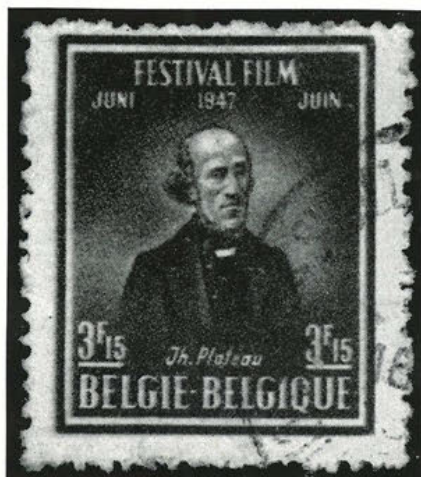
The pioneer work of Thomas A. Edison is so well-known throughout the globe that there is no need to mention his activities concerning cinematography. Fitting tribute to this noted inventor's genius is paid by Hungary on the 8f. (violet) denomination in a new series of ten postage stamps honouring the world's famous men, and released in May last. The well-drawn design of this stamp (as illustrated) shows a bust portrait of Edison with projector and screen in the background.

Another important figure to receive postal recognition is Joseph Antoine Ferdinand Plateau, who lived from 1801 to 1883. This Belgian physicist appears on a 3.15f. (blue) value of Belgium, issued in June, 1947, to mark the opening of the World Film and Fine Arts Festival, held at Brussels. Plateau earned fame for his discovery of a number of elementary film principles in 1829. He developed the "stroboscopic" method of studying the motion of a vibrating body, and prepared, while blind, an analytical catalogue on his favourite theme of subjective visual phenomena.

The 50th anniversary of the motion picture industry in America took place in 1945, and a strikingly designed 3-cents (violet) stamp was produced to mark this important occasion. The scene on the stamp depicts members of the various Services watching a film being projected on to a hastily rigged screen in a jungle clearing. This true-to-life study of a cinema show under war conditions in the tropics, portrays in no uncertain manner the morale building power of the mobile cinema units employed by the Allies during the years of conflict.

In October, 1944, Mexico held a National Book, Film and Radio Fair which provided visitors with a truly representative history of the publishing, screen and wireless industries, and postage stamps were prepared and issued in honour of the event. The 25-cents (green) value provides an unusual stamp design of newspaper format in miniature, together with a microphone cinematograph camera and opened book.

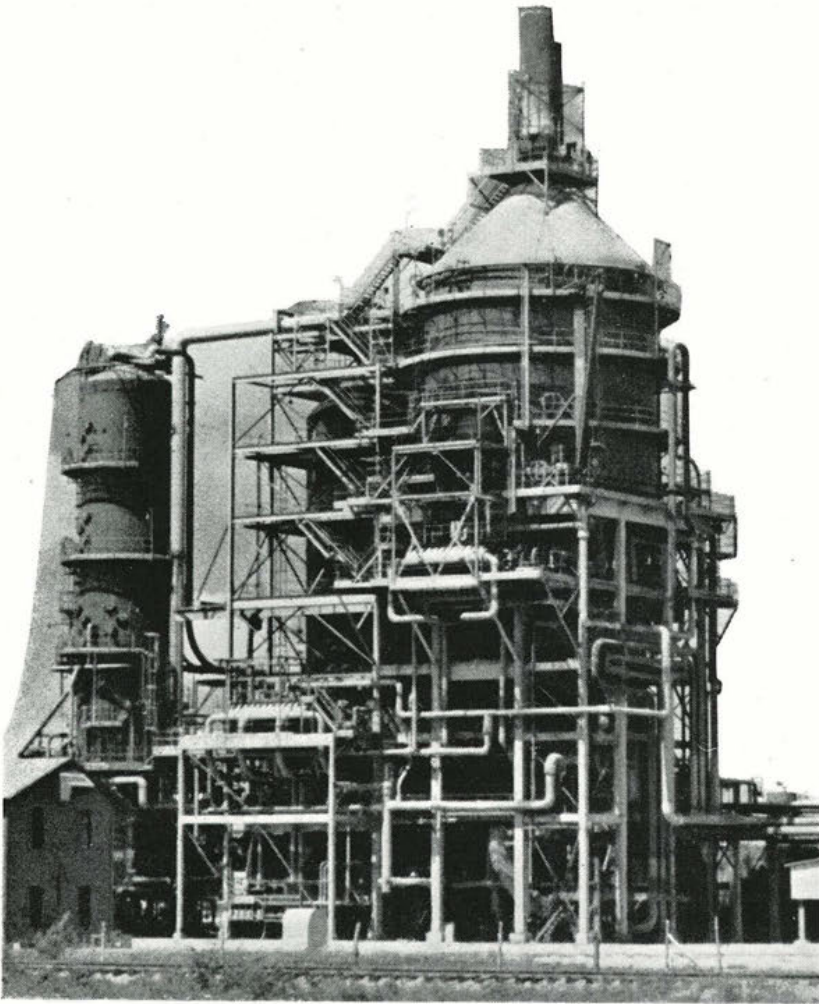
France issued a semi-official 150f. (green) airmail stamp on September 22nd, 1946, for the International Festival of the Cinema, which opened at Cannes on that date. These stamps were despatched from Cannes on letters to the capitals of the twenty countries which participated in the festival, and the design shows a cameraman taking shots of aircraft flying overhead. A short set of five lower denominations was also issued for the air festivities, organised in conjunction with the film gathering, by the Aero-Club of Cannes under the presidency of M. Ch. Tillon, Minister of Air Production. The famous Normandie-Niemen squadron took part in the display. The countries represented at the film festival were Argentine, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Yugoslavia, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. As 220 letters were flown to each country, and only a limited number of stamps issued (viz., 1,000 sets), these specimens have become comparative rarities.



THE SCIENTIFIC FILM IN INDUSTRY

By

JOHN SHEARMAN



Shell Film Unit

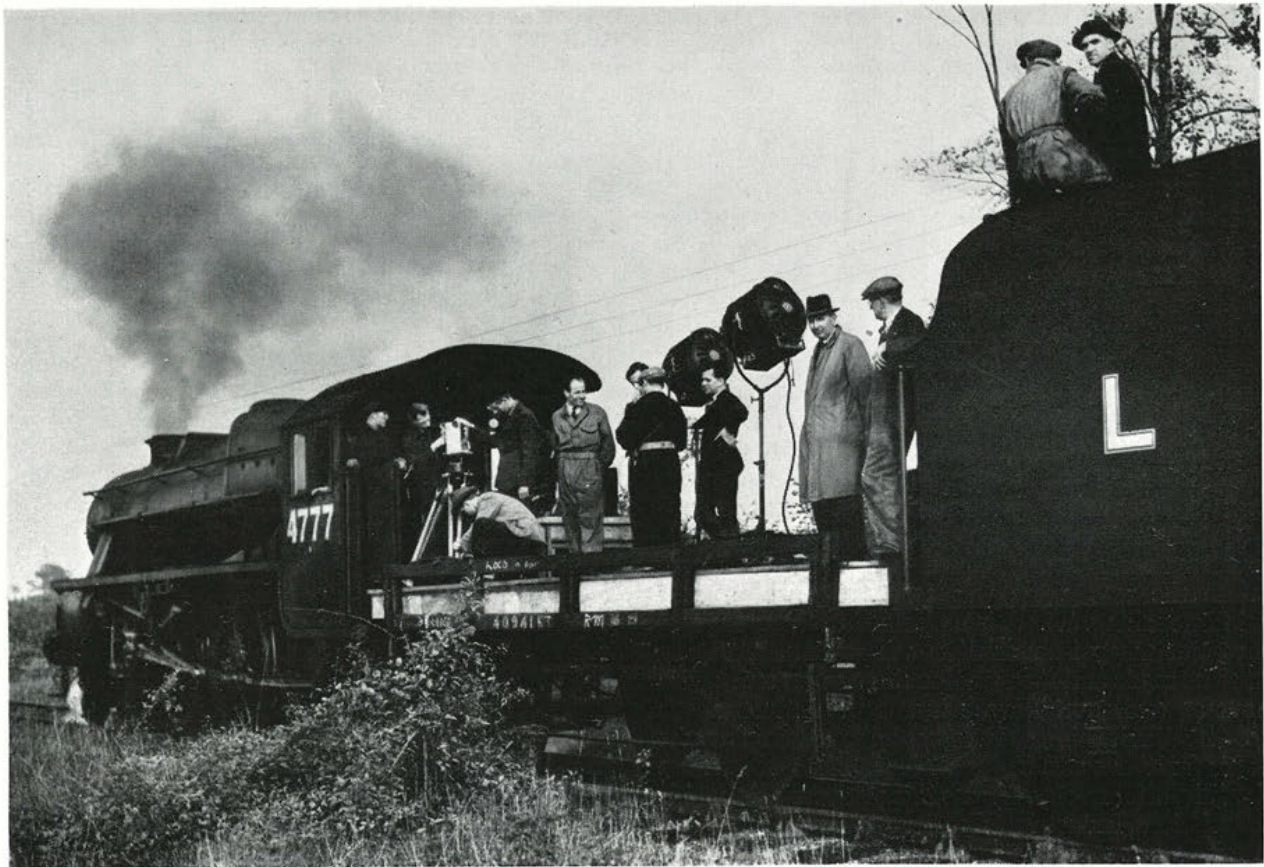
ACCEPTING A RATHER wide definition of "scientific film", we find that industry is concerned in one way or another with quite a large number of the scientific films made in Britain nowadays. That is not to say that all industry is convinced of the value of such films, or even that industry as a whole knows what useful functions films may properly be expected to perform. The industrial scene in this respect is not all sweetness and light; there is a light foreground of an encouraging sweetness; some parts of the middle distance are emerging into the light, and far back there are one or two bright spots.

The light foreground is supplied by certain very large industrial concerns—Shell, Imperial Chemical Industries, the British Gas Council, British Oxygen, and the rest. In parallel with these private-enterprise film activities, some Government Departments and nationalised industries are evidently thinking (and acting) seriously about making some useful industrial films. The Coal Board, for instance, is using films for recruitment of labour—their kerbside cinema vans have been seen around even as far South as London, drawing big crowds; the Cotton Board too is using films for recruitment and is experimenting with instructional and training films. The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research is instigating films on behalf of the Research Associations and the National Physical Laboratory, and has achieved something really satisfactory in *Precise Measurement for Engineers* (DATA)—a film relating the work of the Standards Division of the National Physical Laboratory to the factories and assembly plants of Britain. The L.M.S. Railway, just before nationalisation, brought out a batch of films made by Gaumont British Instructional—a welcome sign that this Company, which

(amongst the four main line companies) pioneered in film making and use before the war, continued to believe that there was benefit to be derived from the medium. At about the same time the L.N.E.R. sponsored films on Safety and Securing of Loads, which were made by Film Producer's Guild. It is now understood that British Railways have film plans—and surely, with railwaymen scattered all over Britain, there is a text-book case for the internal use of the film for staff training and the like.

It appears that the nationalised industries, the Government and the big industrial concerns are gradually formulating for themselves a clear set of ideas about films. They have found that the rather expensive and rather long-winded process of film production is something that must be carried on with purpose and with continuity. They define what they expect their films to achieve; they state at what sort of audience they are aimed; they tend to think in terms of a series of short films rather than of solitary epics. They have lost the illusion that a coruscating fireworks of a film—one superb rocket of a motion picture—will do their job for them once and for all. They are, in fact, approaching the industrial film question in something of a scientific spirit. Now and again they may legitimately expect to get a spectacular result—a four-reel Giant Rocket with red and green bursting stars. But—and this is not a defeatist or defensive statement—such outstanding or spectacular industrial films come about almost as side-effects, proceeding from a quantity of solid, useful, practical film-making. Here there is a parallel with the way in which science work can only be done because a great body of more humble, routine, useful work is being done as a continuing process—it provides the background, the foundation, the combination of circumstances which makes the striking advance possible.

It becomes a somewhat dubious and unprofitable speculation to try to separate the spectacular from the solid work in a more definite way. It is not much use to ask which is the desired end—spectacular or non-spectacular. The fact is that each film that industry or Government



Controlled Firing

UNIT AT REDBOURNE

G.B. Instructional

makes adds something, big or little, to the whole body of industrial film making; each film in a sense grows out of all the films that went before it. It must take a good deal of faith and integrity, as well as a good deal of money and time, for an industrial concern (which is not making films as a business, but only as an aid to the practice of business) to plan to make films on a long-term basis, believing that if it uses imagination wisely based on past experience it will get somewhere in the end. But it now seems clear that that is the proper way to go about it.

The types of film that are being produced as results of this way of thinking vary greatly. There are many ways of classifying them. It can be said that they fall into convenient groups if divided up according to their intended function—to inform the lay public about a facet of contemporary life (e.g., *Flight for Tomorrow*, Shell Film Unit); to keep semi-specialist audiences in touch with a new development of their subject (e.g., *Precision Echo Sounding*, Basic Films, Ltd., for Marine Instruments, Ltd.); to instruct specialist audiences in the purpose, outline or detail of a technique or piece of apparatus (e.g., a whole series on *Welding* by British Oxygen); to teach children some fundamental scientific truths (e.g., the *Heat* series by Realist for the British Gas Council), and so on.

Although one may think one has devised some nice tight groups in a classification of this sort, one constantly finds that films stray over from one group into another. Frequently a film intended, designed and made for a fairly closely specified and limited audience (aeronautical engineers, A.T.C. cadets, welders or what have you) is of interest and value to a much wider audience—of less value,

of course, or perhaps of a different and rather unexpected value—but, none the less, of value. The converse, however, is not generally found to be true. If someone hopefully sets out to make a film which will please and interest everybody, from the layman to the specialist, he invariably ends up with a pastiche of bits for the labourer's mate and bits for the Chief Engineer, all stuck together anyhow, without form as a film nor value for anybody—everyone has a prize from the lucky dip, but nobody is pleased with his prize.

It seems quite essential that industrial films should start out with well-defined limits of content and audience if they are to have any sort of success as films or as instruments by which some useful purpose is served. And this again seems to mean that any industrialist going in for films has got to think in terms of rather a lot of films, and not in terms of one all-purpose, all-time film.

From the film technician's point of view, too, continuity of production, limitation of subject and definition of purpose of the varied types of industrial film is advantageous. A certain amount of scientific film making is, of course, performed by scientists as a by-product of their work. Scientists use the film as a research tool and as a means of recording transient phenomena. But the bulk of industrial film making (scientific and sub-scientific) is nowadays done at the behest of industrialists by professional film makers, who may not be trained scientists, engineers, or technicians in any other technique than the essential one of making films. In order to do a good job they have to achieve (usually in a rather short time) an understanding of the subject. As they go on making industrial and scientific films they find that their ability to grasp technical and scientific

matters improves, and that their understanding of the ways in which industry and applied science proceeds becomes more profound. This improved comprehension seems to show up in their work—we are getting less second-feature clichés, less contrived climaxes, and more conviction, understanding and honest workmanship in our industrial films nowadays.

So far, then, the very large concerns and the Government hold the field—they are making films and using them; they are doing it with a growing knowledge of the limits as well as of the possibilities of the film medium; they are making the film accept responsibilities, and they are accepting their responsibilities towards the film. The small or medium-sized firm tends to say, "It's all very well for them; they can afford it"—afford the money, afford the time, afford to spend both time and money without an immediate tangible return, afford to wait and to experiment and to encourage development in film making, just as they encourage development in their manufacturing processes and products.

The smaller firm probably cannot afford all this. Moreover, before the war, there was some very unfortunate industrial film making. There is no point in raking pre-war muck now, but many industrialists can remember paying for a film to be made and then finding themselves stuck with it—without an audience. Maybe it was the industrialist's own fault—he didn't think about what he was doing; maybe it wasn't his fault—he was badly advised. The fact remains that he is still a bit film-shy. Events like last year's Scientific Film Association Industrial Conference help him; the example of the big concerns may encourage him; the fact that technicians are working continuously on this sort of film means that he is likely enough to get a decent job done, and there are shining examples of firms of less than mammoth dimensions who make a film every now and then, when one is needed, and get the results that they and the film-makers planned and expected. But still, it is easy to understand and sympathise with the industrialist who, though willing enough to use films if he can find them ready-made, decides that he will not promote any films himself, even though he is unable to find, amongst the existing films, anything that does exactly what he wants.

One way out, which has been suggested by the Scientific Film Association, is that a number of firms should band together to sponsor the films that they want. This assumes—and surely it is not an unreasonable assumption—that groups of firms have film needs in common. The training of apprentices in machine-tool practice has been suggested as one such common need; certainly it is a subject which films can help to teach; certainly there are no teaching films available which cover the subject in an up-to-date and adequate way; certainly almost every engineering firm has to teach the subject. The Joint Sponsorship idea is probably a sound one, but it is rather slow to catch on. However, one daring writer on the subject has gone so far as to foresee the day when groups of firms will form film-making Associations just as they now band together in Research Associations for the common good.

The scientific industrial film tends to be particular about its audience—that is to say, it gives its best performance only when it is being watched by the right people; the nearest it should ever come to a "general audience" show is at the meeting of a Scientific Film Society. But there is room for industrial films—and scientific films—which are designed for the big audiences of the cinemas, or for the unspecified but eager non-theatrical audiences here and

overseas. *This Modern Age* has tackled some industrial subjects, but there is a demand for more up-to-date, plain, understandable film statements about British industries and techniques—films designed to tell the people of this country (who are mostly vitally concerned in and with industry), and the people of other countries (who buy our products), what is going on.

Government has made a start with the *Report* films (e.g., *Report on Coal*, Crown Film Unit), and there is Greenpark's *Five Towns*, about the potteries, and their *Seven Dawns to Sydney* for British Overseas Airways Corporation. But it is surely industry's business as well as Government's to make this sort of film.

The list of industrial films available today is patched together with gaps—there is no film, for example, that tells what Time and Motion Study is, how it is carried out, how its results can be applied, nor how it differs from certain other "speed-up" processes which are so rightly disliked by workers, Trade Unions and the better managements. There are almost no films on any aspects of industrial welfare; only a scattered few on hygiene and the prevention of industrial accident and injury; none on modern theories of factory layout or lighting. Training Within Industry—that Government-backed method of teaching men how to teach men how to do jobs—does not (in Britain) use films because it finds no need to, but there is no film which tells people what T.W.I. is, what it has achieved, how it may be changing the whole national pattern of industrial instruction and the relationship between supervisor and workman.

There are almost no British films about the plastics industry; almost no British films about chemical engineering; no up-to-date film on the gas turbine . . . the list of gaps could go on for several paragraphs. On the other hand, there are more films about steelworks, many of them rather superficial and similar, than anyone knows what to do with.

Patchy, uncoordinated, capable of great excellence, and definitely on the up-grade; that is perhaps a fair summary of industrial films in Britain today.

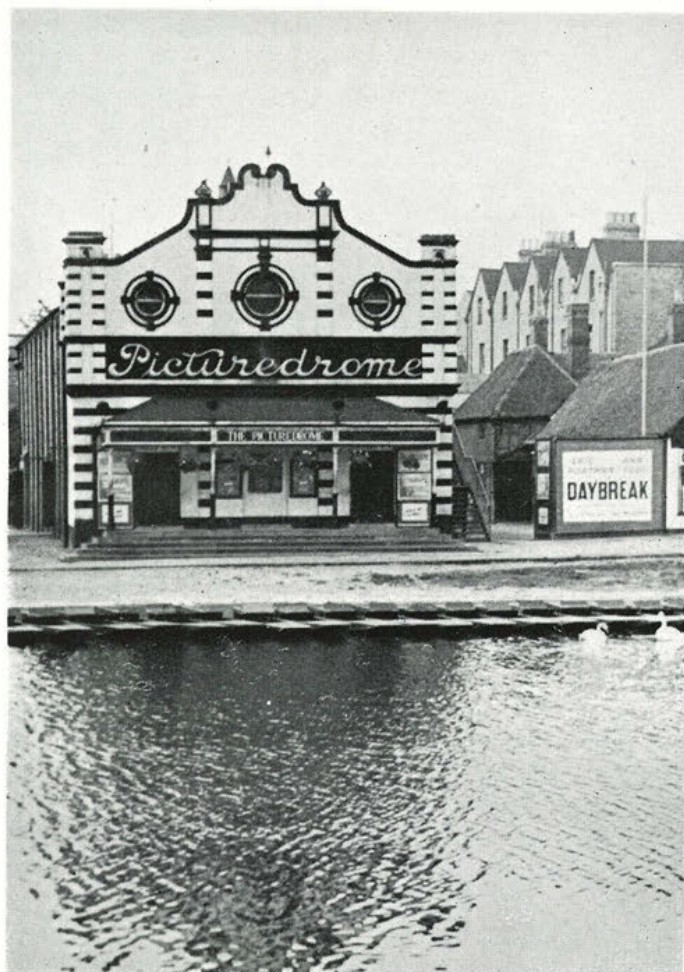
But there is a whole exciting aspect of the scientific use of the film in industry which has barely received mention in this article. Photographic techniques involving the use of the motion picture camera (in various specialised forms) are increasingly being used for industrial research. High speed cameras, which can if necessary work up to 3,000 pictures a second, are being used to aid the study of the surges in valve springs, the functioning of telephone relays, the arcing of electric switches, the behaviour of high-speed loom shuttles, and so on. Photo-elastic analysis of the dynamic stresses in models of working parts under load can be carried out with the aid of the cine-camera. The behaviour of objects in wind tunnels—models of aircraft, bridges and so on, is conveniently recorded and studied by motion picture techniques.* They are films—they are scientific—they are industrial; perhaps it is about them that this article should have been written—but in that case it should have had a different author.

* For fuller treatments of these and related subjects see (*inter alia*):—

1. *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* No. 4751 (Vol. XCV), September 12th, 1947, "Modern Applications of Photography" by D. A. Spencer, Ph.D. (Cantor Lectures).

2. *Science News* No. 7 (Penguin Books), "Uses of Photography" by D. A. Spencer, Ph.D., 1948.

3. Series of articles under the general title "Basic Techniques" now (1948) appearing in *Film Sponsor*. (Current Affairs, Ltd.).



PROVINCIAL SPECIALIST THEATRES

By

RICHARD DELLOW

PROVINCIAL TOWNS, each with their own specialist cinema running in competition with their larger commercial brethren has long been a cherished dream. Ever since the advent of sound robbed the film of its international appeal, the problem of showing foreign films other than American has been a main concern for people whose love for the cinema goes further than a bob's worth of dark and cuddle.

It needs an acquired taste to enjoy a captioned film and to appreciate its filmic qualities. People who have not felt the emotional force of a French film or seen the grandeur of a Russian masterpiece are scarcely likely to clamour for a change of diet unless they get very sick of the soft-centred confectionery that so often comes their way.

But the exhibitor must live, and he must be convinced that it is possible to show continental films without loss of money. Thankfully then we can turn to Bedford where an independent cinema manager has proved that it can be done in any fair-sized town (Bedford has a population of little over 50,000). This manager, Mr. John Chetham, with full permission from his proprietor, has experimented, lost money at times, finally balanced out and now he feels he is in a position to make the showing of continental films a permanent feature of town life. More than that,

he is prepared to make known the full details of his efforts so that other managers can follow suit without making the same mistakes.

He will probably tell you that he was spurred on by a love of the better type of film. He will also tell you that he was hopeful of building up public taste—a creditable intention that other people in the film industry might consider.

"I found", he says, "that it was an easy matter to decide to show foreign films, but when ways and means of presenting them had to be considered, difficulties began to arise one after the other. I knew of many exhibitors who had tried their hand at foreign films. They had slipped a continental film in their normal weekly programme, but each time it had flopped. It seemed that normal cinema audiences were not willing to have such pictures thrust down their throats, while the people who liked them, not generally being regular cinema goers, often knew nothing about the films until it was too late.

"I therefore decided that if the experiment was to have any chance of success six or seven programmes would have to be shewn to give non-cinema goers time to make up their minds to try out the films. The best plan seemed to be to run the programmes on Sundays only, since it would have been financially impossible to give up six or seven weeks' normal playing time. It also meant that if the experiment failed, the losses would not be too considerable.

"I further decided to run two separate performances instead of a continuous performance. Since the films were of a more serious nature, it seemed only fair that audiences should not be disturbed by people coming and going and torches flashing. I feel that this has definitely been worth while. The quiet atmosphere in itself has helped to create interest in the films.

"For the shooting of films, I relied on my own personal taste—within the limits of the films available for Sundays. That choice proved to be rather restricted, but fortunately, there were a number of excellent old films available.

"I received considerable assistance in obtaining films from Film Traders (Academy Cinema) and Studio One Distributors, and my first seven programmes were made up entirely of films supplied from these sources.

ADVERTISING METHODS

"The problem of how to advertise the season was the next difficulty. Normal publicity methods by themselves seemed to hold little chance of success. A large number of four-page leaflets were, therefore, printed, giving full details of the programmes for the first seven weeks, and were distributed to all patrons. I then searched through the Directory and listed all the schools, debating societies, music groups and any other organisations which might be interested in the project. Personal letters were sent to each of them asking for their support and suggesting that they should inform their friends and acquaintances. Finally, of course, use was made of normal screen and press advertising, coupled with special 'news' write-ups of the scheme and its progress in local newspapers.

"Let me confess that I was worried when the day came for the showing of the first film *La Fin du Jour*. I had given it a run through previously and my staff had been none too appreciative.

"But on Sunday, the audience sat through in complete silence. One could feel they were 'with' the film.

"This emphasised the important rule that when an exhibitor judges a foreign film, he must not think in the

light of his normal audience but in the light of creating a *new* audience. Just such an appreciative audience was created; and one by one other people became interested in the atmosphere and the number of our regular patrons began to mount up.

"Audience reaction on the whole was very good. I found the main task was to beat the conservative British objection to something new, an objection that is particularly strong in the case of films where the language spoken is not English. Nevertheless, once people were persuaded to see one foreign film, they seemed to appreciate the quality, and most of them came again and again.

"The more serious type of film seemed to hold the greatest attraction. In fact, the heavier the better. Comedies were received quite well, but attracted smaller houses. This was no doubt due to the greater difficulty in following and understanding a comedy, since a comedy generally relies far more on dialogue than the drama. Light films went down fairly well, especially films with Danielle Darrieux.

"An important factor that constantly called for attention was the correct choosing of supporting programmes. The most suitable were the better type of documentary and magazine surveys like *This Modern Age* and *March of Time* Travelogues and 'popular' science films were definitely unpalatable to the average continental viewer.

"It was surprising also to find what an encouraging atmosphere could be obtained by the right selection of music to be played before the programme and during intervals. We obtained new records of light music, operatic overtures such as 'Marriage of Figaro' and pieces like 'Eine Kleine Nachtmusik'. Pieces like 'It Must be Jelly, 'Cos Jam Don't Shake Like That' were discreetly slipped to the bottom of the pile.

MID-WEEK SHOWS

"Having been fairly successful with Sunday shows, I decided to investigate the possibilities of showing films for longer periods. I chose *Les Enfants du Paradis* and *Panique*, the latter film being a substitute for *Open City*, which I was unable to get at the time. I arranged for the first films to be shown from Monday to Wednesday, and *Panique* from Thursday to Saturday, and further decided to run separate Sunday houses as on Sundays.

"Business done this week was most disappointing, and there was a definite loss of money. Failure was partly due to myself, but if the venture lost money, I, at least, learned some valuable lessons. The first mistake was to have separate performances. It was too sudden to ask people to change round. On week-days, people have to fit in their picture going to suit their working hours, but on Sundays they can make it more of a social function. Indeed, most people seem to expect separate performances on Sundays.

"However, the people who attended the screening of these two films were very appreciative. Many organised parties visited, and a bus-load came from the railway town of Wolverton 14 miles away.

"Two months later I made a second mid-week venture. This time I managed to obtain *Open City*, which was shown from Monday to Wednesday. The latter part of the week was given up to the normal commercial films. I also reverted to continuous performances, building up the rest of the programme with shorts, news and a *March of Time*.

"Business was considerably better. Not full houses—but very satisfactory. However, I found it difficult to decide how much of the success was due to revised presentation methods and how much to the topicality of the film since people's minds were still full of glowing press accounts and exciting tales of how the film was begun while the Germans still occupied Rome. One thing is certain, however. Audiences had a sincere respect and liking for this film.

"I am bearing in mind a possibility which has been tried in other parts of the country—to give a series of full week's presentations of continental films shown with current American or British attractions. This would give the normal week-day audience a free taste of the continental film, but I am not so sure as to its chances of success. The difficulty is to select a programme that will not result in both sides being dissatisfied—the continental lovers because they do not like the commercial picture, and the rest because they do not like the continental film. It is a lamentable fact that people always remember that parts they disliked rather than the parts they liked. For instance, people often go to extraordinary lengths to tell me they thought a 'short' film was awful, but they never mention anything about the feature films they enjoy".

Mr. Chetham will hasten to explain that one of the greatest obstacles to be overcome is the disinterest of the distributors over one-day bookings which sometimes develops almost into obstruction. Apart from Film Traders and Studio One Distributors, distributing organisations were reluctant to lease out films for Sunday showing and were even shy of three-day performances.

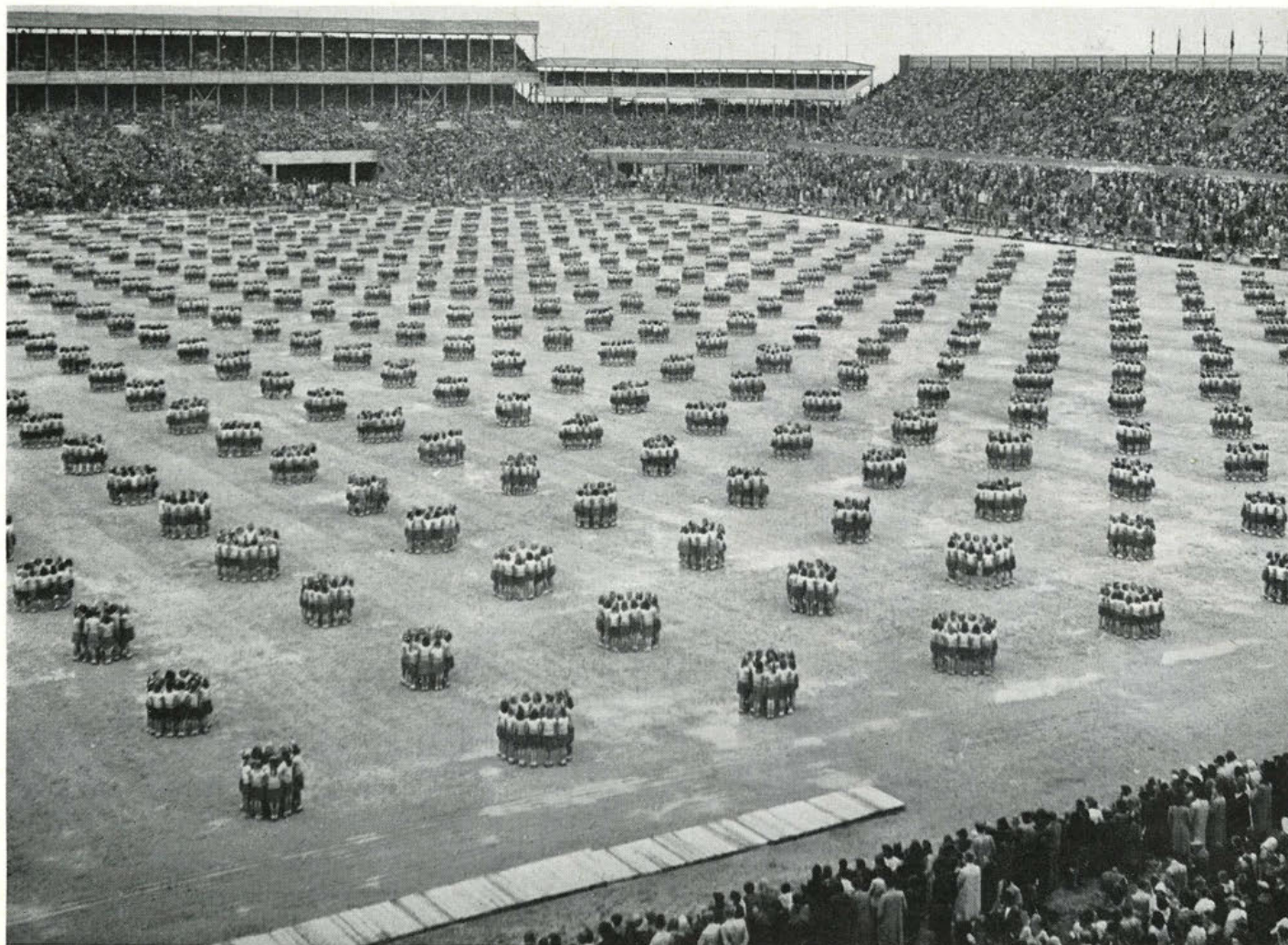
In fairness, it must be recorded that there are reasons apart from financial considerations. Only a very small number of copies of these films are held in Britain.

Nevertheless, it seems to be a short-sighted policy that ignores the need to *create* new audiences for continental films. These audiences can only come into being if distributors make available the best quality films for single-day performances. From such small beginnings we may one day be able to raise current taste and make it possible to show foreign films seven days a week in even the smaller provincial towns.

Sunday specialist cinemas could also assist in the birth of more film appreciation groups and societies since, once serious interest has been stimulated, it is a logical move for people to join together in discussion of their new experiences. Whatever happens, the specialist cinema should never be run in opposition to a film society. If the two exist in the same town, every chance to co-operate should be taken. The exhibitor should primarily concern himself with the "selling" of high grade films to the public and the society should be ready to further stimulate any awakening interest by study, explanation and development of appreciation.

Improved standards of appreciation would subsequently lead to improved productions, because film makers would no longer feel bound to play down to the puerile mentality which they popularly suppose the average cinema-goer to possess. Eventually, too, improved box-office takings would come the way of the exhibitors since the large potential audiences eschewing present screen fare (probably ten million people) would be attracted as regular patrons.

Here is the germ of an idea which can and should be exploited throughout the country—the prelude to a renaissance of informed picture-going.



Sokals in Prague, 1948

Subject for Television

TELEVISION—THE END OF FILM?

By

PETER D. CROSS

TELEVISION—IN THE DAILY quiet hum from the control room at Alexandra Palace, some of the more far-sighted analyse as the birth-pains of the greatest threat to the professional motion-picture since its inception. Nor are they far wrong, although it would be a long way from the truth to state that Alexandra Palace constitutes the major threat. Television in Britain is but one branch of a medium that is rapidly gaining in distinction and comprehensiveness throughout the civilised world. And, just as it would be stupid to suggest that a threat to the motion-picture industry is not materialising, it would be equally stupid to state that this threat is imminent, or at any rate, visibly effective. On the contrary, as the spread of the new Muse increases—and it is now reaching great proportions—

the resistance of the motion-picture industry must be expected to increase, and the first signs of this are becoming apparent. Thus, the effectiveness of television is linked directly to the opposition of the film corporations and the longer these latter can hold out—well, so much the better.

How are they resisting the spread of television? Briefly, in a number of effective ways. (Here, of course, by spread of television, I am referring to the growth of financial opposition rivalry.) Television production is dependent upon film for some of its programmes. To show films with top-ranking stars would immediately cause a rush on sets, and that would be detrimental to the film companies wishes. Consequently, they see to it that no film with any star value is made available for televiewing—or if it is,

then it must be at least ten years old or of high aesthetic value (therefore, low box-office). One of the recent productions tele-screened was the James Stewart-Carole Lombard vehicle *Made for Each Other*, which, considering the average luck of televised film entertainment, was something of a windfall.

BLOCKADE

With present studio capacity, lavish productions to a filmic standard, even if financially possible, would not be practical, and it is to the credit of the programme staff that such a virtually high quality output is maintained. It is interesting to note here that a recent tele-documentary "Report on Germany", with sequences filmed by German cameramen, and dealing with the problems besetting the German nation to-day, was made for the comparatively low sum of £500. Robert Barr, the producer, informs me that so successful was it that it is now being turned into pure film for normal distribution.

This blockade by Wardour Street can well be understood for, even if the profit motive were ignored altogether, it would still be uneconomical for motion-pictures to be made for televising. The present television service is costing a million a year; to produce film other than newsreel might well add another two million to the annual budget.

The same sort of thing is happening in America, where television spread has entered the realms of big dimensions. Here N.B.C. and C.B.S., pioneer radio companies, are also faced with a film blockade, and have to rely upon pure studio and outside transmissions. The U.S. television network now extends down both the East and West coasts and is also linked transcontinentally by co-axial cable between Los Angeles and Miami. At present some twenty-five stations are in operation, with another twenty-five under construction. Viewers number about half-a-million and receivers, which now repose in most of the taverns and night-clubs, are rapidly becoming accepted as normal accessories to American life. Telecasts of sport, and in particular boxing, still claim the largest viewing audience.

Not content with applying this film blockade (which I maintain is wrong—why withhold films after their universal distribution?) at least two of the world's leading motion-picture interests are striking at the television pioneers in a new fashion: by launching attacks on their own ground, the television field. Both the J. Arthur Rank Organisation in this country and Paramount in the U.S. have formulated ideas and poured money into the perfection of large theatre screen television—and, at last, practical results are to hand. Here, one of the first theatres to be equipped will be the G.B. New Victoria; projection will, in all probability, be from a booth built in the centre of the circle and controlled by the operator from the projection box.

This form of televised entertainment may well cause a psychological battle to develop in the minds of the potential viewers of the future—the inherent trend developed in the Victorian era to go out to seek entertainment may well clash with the earlier after-dinner tête-à-tête—only in this case, the receiver will take the

place of the pounding piano. With the small intimate screen, with its seven or eight viewers, a different reaction is experienced, and hence new techniques become necessary. The difference can well be illuminated by reference to the reactions of an audience to a popular comic. In a large theatre, most of the reaction—after receiving an initial send-off from the stage—crackles and reverberates among the audience, so that a goodly proportion of its "laughter power" is derived from this source.

This, however, is only one of the differences which may or may not cause the emphasis on entertainment to revert to the home once more. There are already indications that this is happening, and if the trend develops it will be somewhat of a severe blow to the film industry—and well it knows it. Hence, whilst retaining the false cloak of friendship, both sides are jockeying for position. Television has struck the first blow with the Olympic Games transmissions, using new cameras and new techniques and by installing receivers in every place where they would best boost the medium.

THE FUTURE

One might well argue, after reading all this, that there is ample room in the world for both television and the motion-picture. Whereas the former might well develop into more of a habit, the latter will always retain that air of expectant excitement that characterises "outside" entertainment. Hence its popularity, it stars, will continue. Will it? Will they? Isn't it conceivable that television will make its own stars—it already has an announcer that sends thousands in raptures every night, and forms its own circle of fan gossip? Already many television clubs are in existence in this country and with the opening of the new Birmingham station next year, many more will spring up. Then the influence of the medium will not only affect the older and more mature groups but the young and virile "teen-age" groups as well. And when this happens, the very innards of film finance will suffer a mortal—or if not a mortal, then an extremely severe—blow.

Even when universal television coverage is in operation in this country—which will not be before 1955 at least—the film may still hold its own by exploitation of its two main advantages: colour and possible stereoscopy. Coloured television is possible but not at present practical nor economically advisable. Stereoscopy is already in use for the film and there is no reason why it should not invade the precincts of television. But before this happens, the cost of receivers must be lowered, so that no longer is the possession of television considered a necessity for social leadership but merely a normal "desirable" part of the average home. The lowering trend of prices in recent months has done much to bring television to the middle-class masses in the London area and there is every indication that this will continue. With a lower price comes a larger audience. And a larger audience for television means—for film—?

But there, many are the people whose prophecies have been in the realms of fantasy. Somehow, I don't think mine is. . . .



Tibradden

Production Still

DURING THE LAST FEW YEARS the Film Society movement in Ireland has been labouring through stormy seas. In fact their most ambitious post-war publicity enterprise—a five-day series of lectures by Paul Rotha—was practically wrecked by an actual blizzard!

One of the greatest difficulties in our country has ever been the scattered distribution of the population; only a few centres offer sufficient density to support an active group.

Belfast can boast of having initiated the movement in 1936, though Dublin was quick to follow and the end of the year saw the formation of Cumann na Scannain (i.e., Society of the Film).

The Belfast Film Society began with a single 16 mm. projector in a small hall but before long there were enough members to support regular screenings in a full-sized cinema. The programmes included productions from France, Germany, U.S.S.R., Holland and, of course, the best from Britain and America. A monthly bulletin was published and maintained a high standard of criticism. Well leavened with Northern humour and shrewdness it provided news, comments and conscientious reviews of the worthwhile releases. A vigorous campaign to promote the use of Visual Aids was hampered by war-time difficulties but took on a new lease of life when the society became affiliated to the British Film Institute. Largely due to their

The Amateurs—I.

FILM SOCIETIES IN IRELAND

By
JOHN GERRARD

efforts, the Belfast Corporation has purchased 14 projectors for use in educational establishments throughout the city.

The Dublin pioneers commenced operations in a store at the back of a shop. A 9.5 mm. version of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was screened before an audience of 40, the ladies being provided with chairs while most of the mere males squatted on orange boxes! Membership, however, grew rapidly making it possible to hire a city cinema for a winter season of eight Saturday afternoon shows.

The constitution asserts that the society aims at "the development of film appreciation in Ireland, presentation to its members of the best artistic and educational films of all countries, promotion of the study of film-making, and of a high standard of film production in Ireland, and such other activities as are relevant thereto".

An Executive Council is elected by a ballot "in accordance with the principle of Proportional Representation as used in electing representatives to Dail Eireann"—it's rather difficult to see why such elaborate care should be taken to safeguard the minority in a Film Society!

Recently the annual subscription had to be raised from a guinea to £1 5s. od.; an extra 10s. entitles a member to attend the 16 mm. season of six shows.

DISCONTENT

The Dublin roll approached the thousand mark but last year it dwindled to 720—a number which proved quite inadequate for satisfactory working on the existing lines.

Not all the deserters resigned because of the increase of four shillings! The chief cause of discontent was the fact that several departures were made from the advertised selection.

Formidable difficulties in the booking of films had arisen when the British Film Institute was no longer available as an agent. Renters were unwilling to send attractive films for short bookings in Ireland as the transport delays cut their profits. In addition there was the inordinate rise in rentals, due to the growing market for good continental films. Negotiations with individual firms often proved lengthy and even fruitless.

Down at the Local was screened after a typical series of hitches. Originally despatched for showing in March, it went astray in transit and did not arrive. Towards the end of the month the Army Kinema Corporation promised to send it at a later date. In June, however, came the statement that they had "no authority to cater for Governments outside the British Empire". More negotiations followed and eventually the film was secured through the personal intervention of Dr. Massingham, the Producer. It was shown in November, eight months after the contracted and advertised date.

Other distributors tried to impose "block booking" in connection with features for which the society had already signed contract forms in accordance with the charges quoted. Despite the friendly help and influence of the B.F.I., the firm has remained adamant in its attitude to Irish bookings.

On several occasions films have arrived in extremely bad condition and even with the reels numbered incorrectly.

On top of these troubles came a set of harmful allegations made publicly by a prominent politician. Prior to the last General Election an extremist Republican party arranged for the production of a propaganda film entitled *Our Country*. The rival politician criticised the Film Society for placing its resources at the disposal of the sponsors and also for being unduly prone to include films of Russian origin in its programme! Naturally the prestige of the society suffered to some extent though after correspondence and an interview the accuser acknowledged that he had been misinformed on both of these matters.

Outside of Dublin affiliated groups had been established in various provincial towns but financial problems and the difficulties of obtaining suitable accommodation at reasonable hours led to a unanimous decision to transfer to 16 mm. screenings. Small membership has prohibited even these and at present provincial activity is limited to programmes composed of documentaries available from Legations and presented for schools and cultural societies. In their modest way they are doing much to promote the use of Visual Aids and the Portlaoighise Unit in the Midlands convinced the local Christian Brothers' Schools into making regular use of films.

BETTER PROSPECTS

However, Cumann na Scannain seems to have weathered the worst and already there are sunnier waters ahead. Two well-supported branches have been formed in the universities, National and Trinity. The U.C.D. unit has even embarked upon a short abstract production.

This year's Dublin season will include *The Well-digger's Daughter* (Pagnol), *Panique* (Duvivier), *The Grapes of Wrath* (Ford), *Cabin in the Sky* (Minnelli) and *La Belle et La Bete* (Cocteau). Negotiations are in progress for *Four Steps in the Clouds*, *Murderers are Amongst Us*, and *Germany—Year Zero*. So also are enquiries for suitable features from Germany, Italy, Latin-America and Scandinavia. Transport delays still make the New York Museum of Modern Art disinclined to afford facilities.

It is a promising sign that the bulk of the members stated in last year's questionnaire that they were satisfied with the season which had been completed. The films, in order of preference, were: *Strange Incident*, *Les Disparus de St. Agil*, *Les Visiteurs du Soir*, *L'eternal Retour*, *Scarlet Street*, *Ride Tonight*, *Immensee*, *Portrait of Maria* and *Lermontov*.

Cumann na Scannain has achieved much in the past and has ambitious plans for the future.

Special credit is due to the Society for launching a campaign seeking the provision of films suitable for children. Comhairle na nog (The Children Committee) was organised in 1942 and eventually a public conference was held in Dublin, Mr. Oliver Bell of the B.F.I. being one of the speakers. So much interest was stimulated that in the following year a National Film Institute was established and obtained a generous grant from the Government for the assembly of a Central Library.

FIRST SCHOOL

Having accomplished this valuable pioneer work, the Film Society turned its attention to Adult Education. In Dublin a mobile unit was formed and began to circularise vocational and cultural groups with a view to arranging specialist shows which could be followed by lectures and discussions. The service has been utilised by numerous societies including trade unions, the Royal Dublin Society, Y.M.C.A., and the Dublin Agricultural College.

In 1943 they founded what is believed to be the first School of Film Technique, the ideal being the encouragement of young producers who might some day enable Ireland to make worthwhile contributions to Cinema. Lack of qualified teachers hindered the continuation of the enterprise which has now been temporarily abandoned so that more money can be expended on the Production Unit.

Their first film, *Foolsmate*, was completed in 1940 at a cost of £15 and was a romance back-grounded by the War of Independence (1921). Next a number of teachers essayed a geographical film, *Zones*, and then completed several useful educational shorts. Other modest projects were *Tibradden* and *Mannon's Acre*, the latter dealing with a land problem complicated by coast erosion. A script is at present being prepared for a marionette film in conjunction with the Dublin Marionette Group. Almost ready for screening is *These are the Times*, a short story-documentary (credit limited to £40) on the Dublin Housing Crisis.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Executive Council is making particular efforts to extend its field of co-operation with the Film Society movement in general and contacts have been established with groups as far away as Australia, exchanging ideas and opinions. Cumann na Scannain makes a point of being represented at international functions such as the recent Film Festivals at Edinburgh and Cannes and also the Viewing Sessions of the Federation of Film Societies. Six members attended the Film Appreciation Summer School organised in Bangor by the B.F.I.; they returned highly pleased with their experiences and the ideas they had obtained for programmes.

The Society faces the future with every confidence, fortified by the memory of trials overcome. Plans are eagerly being discussed for the re-organising of provincial branches. It should not prove too difficult. Though it would not be quite accurate to state that there are, as yet, many likely recruits for orthodox film societies "devoted wholly or mainly to the study of film technique", it is obvious that interest is rapidly growing in the intelligent use of the Cinema, especially for educational and cultural purposes.

ART ON A TWO-FIGURE BUDGET

An experiment in Amateur Production described by

TONY ROSE

THE CINEMA, MORE THAN any other art medium, depends on expensive raw materials. A painter, whether he is working for a commission or for the love of it, spends about the same amount on a canvas. Not so the film maker. If he is a professional, a first feature will cost him something in the region of £160,000; if an amateur, then probably nearer £16.

I can vouch personally for the second figure because that was the cost of *Full Circle*, an amateur film for which I wrote the script last Summer. Making it, of course, was great fun. It was done "on location" in the Chiltern Hills, and about 95 per cent. of the shots were exteriors. The one interior scene was filmed in the director's bathroom—after we had removed the door from its hinges. There were twenty of us in the unit—members of the High Wycombe Film Society.

Yes, it was fun, but I wonder whether the amateur can ever hope to do more than have fun. Freed from the twin devils of sponsorship and box-office, can he use his freedom to produce, shall we say, a work of art; or failing that, something that might suggest a new line of development to the professional? Just supposing that he has the talent.

He would like to think he could, but even with a masterpiece at the back of his mind, he must consider first what he can buy for £16. Ours was spent as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Film stock (700 feet of Kodak Super X)	11	18	0
Recording blanks	1	6	6
Taxi hire	0	7	6
Donation to funds of church used in film	0	5	0
Ice cream consumed by players in film	0	3	0
Stills	2	0	0
	£16	0	0

The first of these items and the final cut length of the film (425 feet), were worked out before the script was written. (It should be added that the camera and recording equipment were loaned by members of the Society). Thus I knew that the action of my story must be contained in seventeen minutes and that it must be self-explanatory, though the musical background might be relied upon to help convey mood. Synchronized dialogue would have entailed sound recording of film and, even with borrowed equipment, would have doubled production costs. Captions we rejected as being retrogressive and a waste of footage. Incidentally, all this is probably quite commonplace to other amateur film makers, and there are dozens of similar units to ours all over Britain, but I describe things as new because they were new to us.

The story had to be simple therefore. In fact, it was also somewhat overburdened with clichés: a boy and a girl

are discovered making love on a hillside. In the background a picnic party is in progress. The boy goes to sleep and dreams that he steals an engagement ring, is chased to the top of a church tower and falls off. On waking, he discovers that the members of the picnic party are the people he has been dreaming about. That is all.

Though lacking in intrinsic merit, the script succeeded as a test piece for the Society's first production. It showed us that we could tell a story in pictures and music without resorting to the technique of old silent movies (exaggerated gestures, mouthing and captions). We found that the points of the plot were quite easily assimilated by the audience when the film was given its "premiere" at the local repertory theatre. If anything, we had played a little too safe in the effort to avoid obscurity. Further, we had sounded the cameraman's range and ability—the dream involved a number of trick shots and double exposures and one tracking shot, performed with the aid of a tea wagon—while the chase gave the cutter something to think about.

Other limitations that we had not bargained for at the outset cropped up during production. For instance, we found it difficult to avoid variations of density in consecutive shots using reversal film. Dissolves we had to manage in the camera by gradually closing the aperture at the end of one shot, winding back the film and gradually opening it again at the beginning of the next. Again . . . we could afford only a very few re-takes, for whereas the professional probably wastes five or six feet for every one used, we had to use more than we wasted. I am not going to say that these things were unnoticeable in the finished picture. The important thing was that we were learning how to use the small resources at our disposal.

Where to go from here? Having made a technicians' picture, we decided to see what we could do with actors. *Leave It To Me*, the film we are making now, is a comedy of character. The characters are fairly broad, it is true, but all the same they have to be established as people and not merely animated figures in a landscape, as was the case with *Full Circle*. There is another point of departure. Most of the action of the new film takes place indoors. So we are faced with the problem of lighting pre-determined sets; in other words, our own homes¹.

By the Autumn, when we plan to have a rough cut ready, we should know the worst or the best. We shall either be in a position to embark on something we consider really worth while, experiments apart, or else sadly resigned to the fact that there is a financial low-water-mark below which art cannot function in the Cinema. In the latter case, we shall probably just go on having fun.

¹Judging from reviews of *The Naked City* and *Call Northside 777*, the professionals are coming half way to meet us here.

CARTOONS AND MODERN MUSIC

By

JOHN H. WINGE

WHEN MICKEY MOUSE RECEIVED a voice it was a package deal. With it went the voices of sundry other animals, of humans, of steam whistles, railroad trains, slamming doors and thunderstorms. And a collection of semi-classical overtures rescued from beach-side band concerts was thrown in as a continuous musical backdrop. Sound had descended upon the animated cartoons with a bang, and the bang was going to stay.

It's now some twenty years since Mickey's first squeak went up in a ramshackle building on Melrose Boulevard in Hollywood, near the Paramount Studios. The music does not any more run along haphazardly consisting of standard pieces and popular songs quoted without permission of the publisher. Fat retroactive payments convinced the front office it might save money to have the music especially written and all necessary quotations cleared by copyright lawyers first. This way the composers leaked in and with them new music—of all kinds.

While the great majority of cartoons seems to limit itself to a stream of hackneyed foxtrots pierced by the fusillades of the sound effects boys, M-G-M's Tom and Jerry series and its cartoons by Tex Avery seem to have higher musical ambitions. For fourteen years they have been musically serviced by a slight, lively gent, Scott Bradley—a composer whose thorough musicianship has made itself felt in a quite different type of cartoon scoring. Starting from scratch like his colleagues he, too, was restricted to a small-sized orchestra and a picture not longer than six or seven minutes. He had to fight (and is still in there pitching) the habit of directors to drown a picture in a Babeldom of unchained sound machines. He had to convince them that musical sound effects were not only possible but often more effective than mechanical ones, since they were part of the orchestration. But directors were still satisfied with a diatonic scale ascending when the character ran up the stairs and reversing it on his way down or rushing up the chromatic scale when someone was going to be catapulted right beyond the moon. A low diminished seventh chord denoted imminent danger, and the final Iris-out demanded the retarded triplet figuration for full orchestra, known as the Paramount Publix ending.

But a twenty-men orchestra posed another problem—it sounded thin. So Bradley had to re-consider it as a large chamber group: he treated the wood-winds individually, the strings as a quintet and the piano as a solo instrument instead of as a filler. But this approach demanded multiple counterpoint and unconventional harmonic devices. The kind of fast a-rhythmic stories used in cartoons did not lend itself to a steady rhythmic pattern or to long-winded melodic lines. Bradley sensed here a strong affinity between the structure of the cartoon and modern music.

All this led him away from the beaten path. First, he used Stravinsky's well-known Petrouchka chord as a shock device denoting Jerry Mouse's horrified gasp. This harmonic innovation ranks—in Bradley's words—with Wagner's harmonization of the chromatic scale in *Die Walküre*. Rimsky-Korsakoff used the basic progression as a modulation, *i.e.*, C-major to F-major, but Stravinsky combined the two, sounding them simultaneously in various inversions in close and open harmony. This device is the basis of most contemporary harmony, save Schoenberg's Twelve-Tone System. For years Bradley has been using it too, as probably the only composer in his field. "The Twelve-Tone System", he says, "provides the 'out-of-this-world' progressions so necessary to under-write the fantastic and incredible situations which present-day cartoons contain".

The irregularity of the action let him escape what he calls "the tyranny of C-major" and choose freedom of accent and phrasing. However, only a small part of the cartoon score can be given to the chill severeness of modern music; some of the corn can be extracted yet from chromatic scales if they are played in several keys simultaneously, and from the diatonic if they are heard as consecutive minor seconds in the strings and often as major (small) seconds in the wood-winds and piano.

"The leit-motif structure is essential to unity and character", Bradley believes, "despite the tendency nowadays to consider it 'old hat'. It is so only if treated in the Wagner-Liszt manner. With the new harmony and polyphony the leit-motif is most effective. In a recent cartoon, *Out-foxed*, I wrote a short four-voiced fugue on '3 Grenadiers' with the little tune 'Jonny's Got a Nickel' serving merrily as the counter subject. Cartoons usually do without fugues, but here it fits the action. Musically spoken, you can get away with almost anything in pictures if the score only captures the 'feeling' of the sequence".

Not even iconoclast Bradley is trying to get away from a more or less literal musical interpretation of the action and one is quickly reminded of the rather depreciative term "mickey-mousing". It is commonly applied to the habit of many a Hollywood composer to underline every "important business" as performed by the cast with all the burps and giggles the orchestra can simulate. Bradley does not care for the quality of disparagement linked to this term, since he thinks that all theatrical music follows the story more or less closely and even certain symphonies are descriptive.

How different Bradley's music is even in a mechanical sense shows in a remark by Lou Raderman, the concert-master of M-G-M's fine symphonic orchestra. "Scott writes the most blank-blank-blank difficult fiddle music

in Hollywood", Lou complains, "he is yet going to break my fingers". And Bradley's trombone players have to reach those far-deep-down pedal notes; the clarinets must be able to play out-of-tune, but this very precisely so and now he is chasing after a slide-trumpeter to obtain certain odd high glissandi. Many instrumental effects cannot be written down, but have to be explained verbally. Most musicians grasp them quickly and seem to get quite a kick out of the intricately subtle sound produced by their instruments as released by Bradley's inexhaustible imagination.

The request for humorous music (there is little of it in existence) can be met by a burlesque exaggeration of expression, but Bradley prefers his unorthodox harmonizations of known little melodies which turn into hilarious sound when synchronized with the proper cartoon action.

He has noticed, of course, that post-war cartoons are displaying a particularly great amount of violent action, super-speed, and cruel, sadistic punishment, which virtually demand the cacophonous harshness of modern composing. But he expects the near future to bring to cartoons a general slow-down and an abandonment of barbarousness in favour of more whim and colourful personalities. He will not recant the rich spectrum of modern music, however, regardless of any revolution that might befall the cartoon of the future.

Bradley is rightly proud of his *Cat's Concerto*, in which Tom impersonates a pianist modelled after the late Vladimir de Pachman. While playing a Liszt Rhapsody, he displays exact fingering and those dramatic shiftings and flutterings of the wrists as sported by the Polish virtuoso and meticulously re-posed by Bradley himself for the benefit of the animators.

The outstanding success of this masterpiece led to the preparation of *Master Tom* (temporary title) which is going to be a performance of Johann Strauss' *Fledermaus* Overture in the Hollywood Bowl with Tom as the wild-maned conductor, Catowsky. He might bear a strange resemblance to the looks and mannerisms of a famous maestro whose name rhymes easily. Yet Strauss' score is going to be played orthodoxly in the most sensuous Bruno Walter tradition.

"Only cartoons give the picture composer a chance to hear a composition of 6 to 7 minutes' length almost without interruption", Bradley says. "I wish that our contemporary masters would take interest in cartoon work. For men like Copland, Bernstein, Britten, Walton, Kodaly, Shostakovich or Prokofieff it would be a very fruitful experience. Their contributions would certainly advance the cartoon as a genre".

TWO PEOPLE DISAGREE

One, with William Robertson

The Editor, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,

I like American films. But I don't like William Robertson's article in the Summer SIGHT AND SOUND explaining why one should.

Why not? Firstly, because he says I don't! I'm an intellectual, you see, and he claims I sneer at Hollywood and approve of British films. Nothing could be less true; he doesn't understand me in the least. Of course there are grades of intellectualism. I, naturally, am grade I; my favourite films are *Duck Soup*, *Clementine*, *L'Atalante*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *Menilmontant* and *King Kong*. About grade IV we find people who are prepared to discuss Olivier's *Hamlet* seriously and who think all Italian films superb (even *Four Steps*). And in grade VII you'll find them talking about visual metaphors. But dear Mr. Robertson's Aunt Sally's are way down in grade LXX, definitely in the pseudo category along with those who think *Red Shoes* is wonderful and *The Outlaw* awful. Pretentious middlebrows, in fact.

And secondly, the article irritates because it loses a good idea beneath a sickening mass of side issues calculated to shatter anyone's belief in the judgment of the writer. We have *Bells of St. Mary's* grouped with *Centennial Summer* and *Chuny Brown* with *Hail the Conquering Hero*. Of course American films are wonderful, but you don't convince anyone by pretending that *It's a Wonderful Life* is anything but treacle. For a nice, sentimental picture, why not take *Margie*, *Wake Up and Dream* or *Sunday*

Dinner for a Soldier? But not later Capra. And to describe *London Town* as the "British equivalent" of anything is stark nonsense.

Still, the article does finish with a cosy chat about the nations understanding and tolerating one another.

Sorry about all this (or should I say, "The writer apologises for the above"?)

Yours,

JAY KENDAL.

Two, with John Grierson

The Editor, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,

I think there is a very good reason why Government-sponsored documentary films are (and must be) "in a decline", and this is the fact that the business of government is becoming an increasingly unreal activity. Political action is no longer measured in terms of personal, inner happiness, for the present aim of governments seems to be to turn the village into so many "mouths" and a ship or a factory into so many "hands". Art cannot compose itself with material from which the inner problems have been dismissed. Neither can the artist, working in the government-sponsored documentary, take as his theme the great moral gesture. These have not been made: we have not, alas, renounced power politics or war.

Yours faithfully,

OSWELL BLAKESTON.

EDINBURGH 1948

Retrospect and Analysis

By

MERVYN REEVES

A RECENT COMPETITION in "Documentary Film News" invited entrants to compose a letter to an uninformed aunt telling her what a documentary film was. The prize was awarded to an excellent collection of *facetiae*; but had the successful competitor attended the second International Festival of Documentary Films at Edinburgh this year—at which more than a hundred films were shown—he could hardly have proved more helpful. For here were works with a wide range of style and purpose—art, abstract, and experimental films; educational and scientific films, propaganda and screen journalism, feature-documentaries, and, no doubt, documentary-features. Nor was much guidance offered by an accompanying exhibition which sought to distinguish documentaries by their lighting, treatment, and make-up, and ended by suggesting that *Atomic Physics* and *Millions Like Us* were documentaries because of their "truthful approach". For if my memory serves me right, these films presented a scientific and artistic truth respectively, and the latter, surely, admits quite a lot of work? However, we read with relief that the World Union of Documentary formed at Prague recently has agreed upon a definition. And as documentaries are usually short films, I will deal with the long ones first.

The Louisiana Story is allegedly Flaherty's last film. Would it disprove the law of diminishing utility which has governed the careers of so many great directors, and, like *Nanook*, be showing in countless school halls in twenty-five years' time? I think not. True, "the best eyes in the cinema" regaled us with some of the most beautiful water-photography imaginable (together with some remarkable location sound effects), and endeared us to his Accadian boy, who, with his pet racoon, vividly illustrated Flaherty's dictum about children and animals being the best actors. But the inanity of the oil prospectors was such that it must surely have been Flaherty's sly comment on the invasion of the quiet picturesque world to which he is so sensitive. The oil-boring process, while giving some scope for technical virtuosity, remained an unhappy intrusion, and was suggestive of a grudging concession to the sponsors—Standard Oil. If Flaherty's threat to retire is idle, let him eschew oil in favour of water colours.

A powerful antidote to Flaherty's romanticism was Rossellini's *Germania, Anno Zero*, a sombre, dispassionate work, with all four feet firmly on the ground. The story of a community in Berlin on the verge of civilisation, it depicts a struggle to live in the putrefying atmosphere of a discredited philosophy, and of hideous, cold-blooded parricide by a young boy who afterwards kills himself. Is this the last lash of the Nazi tail? Not according to some who say they discerned an innate viciousness in the boy

from the start—before his corruption by an ex school teacher. And while it may have been my imperfect understanding of the German dialogue, I detected no implication of congenital homicidal tendency, but only an urgent warning to clear up the ghastly moral and material débris which Rossellini has so faithfully put on record.

SILENT CAVALCADE

It was with some misgiving that one approached a full-length film "composed of material selected from actuality films shot between 1900 and 1914" (*Paris*, 1900). Cavalcades of silent films are often commendably quaint, but productive of eye-strain and other irritations. However, this beautifully devised scrapbook from unusually rich film archives has been edited by Nicole Védres with a shrewd eye for contrast and timing, given an excellent musical score, and is of unusually good photographic quality. The numerous personalities and events presented probed the recesses of one's memory in a most exciting way, reviving scraps of school lessons, faintly remembered works of art, family albums, and, as the cheering troops leave for the 1914 war, the grave look on grandfather's face.

In Michael Powell's *The Edge of the World* we were able to observe the pristine talent of a director who afterwards deserted the dog-biscuits of Foula for the fleshpots of the Archers (much good shooting, but few bulls' eyes). The grandeur and unity of this ten-year-old film remained—despite some stilted performances and a melodramatic plot. On the whole, prizes are no longer awarded for grandeur in documentary, but for the successful handling of amateur players. Here the two Danish directors, Bjarne and Astrid Henning-Jensen impressed the Festival with their two films *Ditte Menneskebarn* and *De Pokkers Unger* (see SIGHT AND SOUND, No. 63), both of which were more documentary in purpose than in style. The first, a study of an illegitimate child (beautifully played by Tove Maas) moves slowly but has moments of great beauty and human insight; the second, a Danish *Emil and the detectives* poses the problem of children's playgrounds, successfully avoids the coyness which lurks round the corner of every children's film, and is an excellent work of its kind. The technical quality (in particular the sound recording) of these and the other Danish films was outstanding.

The above, together with *Slavitzka* (Yugoslavia) (see SIGHT AND SOUND, No. 62), an ambitious, interminable film about partisans, in the Russian caricature style, were the "big pictures" of the Festival. To these we went with some foreknowledge of their probable merits. It was the



The Quiet One

Film Documents, New York

scores of bread-and-butter productions, varying in length from Norman McLaren's two-minute abstract films, to the comprehensive and excellent *Story of Printing* made for the British Ministry of Education, which comprised the bulk of the Festival. Traditionally documentary is on an intimate scale, and we were hoping to find that among the scores of unpretentious, unheralded contributions would be hiding a future classic of the screen. At the same time only somebody who had sat through a programme which contained films on international affairs, physiotherapy, Henry Moore's sculpture, dietetics, child-psychology, and the dramatised presentation of a famous Italian painting, can really appreciate the flexibility of mind and tendency to myopia which it entailed. In this article I am concerned to notice virtually all the films shown as a guide to Film Societies and others responsible for compiling programmes—although frankly one would prefer to devote all the space to the more meritorious entries.

Since the days of the G.P.O. Film Unit, poetic documentary has unfortunately suffered a prolonged setback in Britain. This reaction has its healthy aspect, as the heavily-filtered cloud-offerings from foreign artists with a shorter tradition showed. But the entry of two works by John Eldridge, whose lyricism and imagination are a great asset to British documentary, aroused considerable excitement in my mind.

Both in *Waverley Steps*, a delightfully oblique portrait of Edinburgh, a sort of middle-class *Rien que les Heures*, and *Three Dawns to Sydney*, made for the B.O.A.C., he has not disappointed those who thought so much of his work, though his avoidance of conventional treatment is occasionally forced.

The animation and dramatisation of static subjects by cutting and musical accompaniment has considerable limitations. Despite this, no less than six of the Festival films were of this type. *Dramma di Cristo* (Italy) and Henri

Storck's study of paintings by Paul Delvaux were the most successful; *Agneau Mystique* (Belgium) and *Corteo Dei Magi* (Italy) less so. Of a different type was the pleasing *Loon's Necklace* in colour, illustrating an Indian legend by the manipulation of a collection of masks from the National Museum of Canada.

Of two films about Germany, the British *A School in Cologne* retailed some shocking statistics in a quiet but effective way, but suffered from an unfortunately simpering commentary. *Hunger* was a just exposition of the world food problem in relation to Germany herself. Food and agriculture were also the subject of *The School That Learned to Eat* (U.S.A.), an experiment in practical dietetics, and *Florida, Wealth or Waste?* (U.S.A.) with excellent scripts, but somewhat protracted.

SWEDEN STARTLES

The prize for candour went to an Indian film for the instruction of midwives, exposing the danger of native healing practices, lucid and authoritative, but with an imperious commentary reminiscent of Miss Hodgkiss.

In *Les Santons*, *Steps of the Ballet* and *Lord Siva Danced*, attempts were made, with varying degrees of success, to make ballet and the dance film-worthy. The first, a Provençal masque about the Nativity, which had the advantage of first-rate artists, achieved complete flatness; the second successfully described elementary ballet technique, and then fell apart when it tried to present the finished product; the third, concerned with the Indian dancing of Ram Gopal and others, presented a judicious mixture of exposition and interpretation, but lacked an Indian commentator.

Four short Danish films completed the Danish contribution. *Cutter H.71*, an account of building a boat, was pleasantly reminiscent of the G.P.O. style, but carried an incongruous swing musical score. The same criticism applies to *Breaking the Ice*, which nevertheless contained some excellent shooting. *Papir* was a lively exhortation to save paper; and *Shaped By Danish Hands*, a particularly impressive survey of individual Danish craftsmanship, infected at least one observer with an intense desire to make pottery (which has now happily passed off).

Sweden sent two brief but startling contributions—Arne Sucksdorff's miraculously photographed *A Divided World*, which subtly contrasted the serenity of human civilisation with the predatory ruthlessness of the animal world which is never far away. *The Sacrifice* was a superbly cinematic reconstruction of a pagan ritual of human sacrifice in the style of Dreyer's *Jeanne D'Arc*.

Of solitary entries from Spain, Bulgaria and Argentine, *Arcos de la Frontera* portrayed the charm of an Andalusian village; *Men Among the Clouds* provided some excellent mountain scenery in its somewhat repetitive account of Bulgaria's meteorological service; and in *The Sleeping Villages* a portrait of the Humahuaga Indians, unfamiliar landscape scenes and irresistible processions of llamas successfully averted the continual Fitzpatrician threat in the commentary: a tightrope which *Britain Down Under*, a film of Tasmania, tumbled right off.

From the U.S.A. came *Henry Moore*, a 16 mm. Kodachrome study of the sculptor. This suffered not only from a bad recording, and an inappropriate glimpse of the artist himself at a cocktail party, but also carried a flatulent

commentary in the best declamatory style of the department-store. Compared with the recent *Matisse*, this was a dim portrait of the artist and his work; and *Aubusson* (France), a film about the village where Jean Lurçat's tapestries are made on a co-operative basis, also lacked the perspective of *Matisse*. (But it mercifully made no reference to the fact that these works of art are classed with dish-cloths for the purpose of import duty in this country.)

Goemons (France), beautifully directed by Yannik Bellon, depicts a small isolated colony on a tiny island off the coast of France. Their stock-in-trade is seaweed, their only contact with civilisation a broken-down gramophone. Yet time and again one of their number packs a bag and sits hopefully scanning the horizon for a ship. "But", says the commentator, "he will return when he is hungry." This is poetic realism at its best, contriving to be both evocative, and by sticking to its theme—seaweed—informative. Other effective "process" films included *Chanson de Toile* (Belgium), *Die Orgel, Königin der Instrumente* (Austria), which showed the building of an organ, and recorded it badly when it was finished.

SINCERITY

Among the experimental and cartoon entries were the puppet film *The Dragon of Cracow* (Poland), and the Russian cartoon *The Vain Bear*, both with excellent touches of humour, and our own Charley in *New Town* and *Your Very Good Health*. Charley has wedded wit and information, and dealt a welcome blow to the apparent belief that exhortation cannot carry a smiling face. But the merriest exponent of this philosophy continues to be Massingham. His *They Travel by Air* proved simultaneously humorous, instructive and good cinema. *La Rose et le Reseda*, an attempt to interpret poetry (read by Jean-Louis Barrault), with music by Auric, is a tribute to two members of the Resistance. The style is avant-garde, and will be full of cinematic curiosities to those reared in the simpler conventions of film-making. The U.S.A. *Chinese Shadow Play* led us into the secrets of the oldest entertainment in the world in a way which was not particularly arresting.

Yet a strong theme, light touch, and a generous budget are nothing in documentary compared with sincerity of purpose. This was present in the most completely successful film of the Festival—and I think the classic for which we had been searching. It came from the U.S.A. and was called, appropriately, *The Quiet One*. Much more space should be given to this film than my article allows. Made at Wiltwyck School, New York, it is a moving account of the rehabilitation of a negro child by psychiatric social workers, of how the lack of domestic stability in his youth breeds resentment, desolation and destructiveness, till he sees the whole world conspiring against him; but slowly and haltingly, through the subtle skill and sympathy of the social workers, he comes to believe again in other people, and finally in himself. *The Quiet One* illustrates how few other documentary films of the same type really get inside their subject: that it should also be able to claim excellent cinematic qualities, and imaginative and clear presentation—particularly the superb handling of the boy—makes it a film of the first importance. It is, alas, on 16 mm. only, and not a very good recording. But its merits prevail over this defect.

In a more modest way, Alan Harper's *Hill Sheep Farm* imparted to a somewhat conventional subject a new fascination. All the shooting had to be done in dull weather, and the treatment was entirely straightforward, yet by a judicious use of commentary, selection of significant detail, and excellent cutting, this film registered where so many similar documentaries fail. *The Story of Printing* was notable for its successful reconstruction of historical material, though I suspect school children may despise the stolid pace at which it moves even in the continuity passages. *Precise Measurements for Engineers* and *Charting The Seas* (G.B.) displayed the supremely high standard of instructional film technique which Britain can achieve. Both proved fascinating despite (or because of) the complete absence of background music, a convention to which many film makers cling so tenaciously.

One was glad to see one of the excellent series of Realist children's films, *Your Children's Sleep*, but it would be extremely interesting to know whether the lessons presented are really understood, or whether they merely add neuroses in the parents to those of the children! Brian Smith's handling of his players is beyond criticism, and could profitably be noted by those who seek novelty in the dialogue-documentary. Thus, *A Plan to Work On* was pervaded by a pipe-smoking City Architect whose maps and chatty manner became tedious.

Canada, which justifiably had a programme to itself, treated the Festival to an encyclopædic variety of subjects, including three of Norman McLaren's explosive abstract films, a somewhat ponderous tour of Quebec (*Horizons de Quebec*), *Feeling of Hostility* which eschews the miraculous cure seen last year in *Feeling of Rejection*; *Who Will Teach Your Child*, which should be shown once a week in every Training College; and *Maps We Live By*, an incomparable piece of animated geography which incidentally showed how to bridge the gulf between education and entertainment in the commercial cinema. *Home Town Paper* describes the influence and duties of the small-town newspaper; and *It's Fun To Sing* introduces a charming

Edgar Kennedy-like chorus-master who turns very raw material into first-class choral singers.

Another dominion, Australia, contributed the novel story of *Bee Keeping on the Move*—the insects being carried from place to place according to where the blossom is most plentiful.

Two of the films we all made (United Nations), *Clearing The Way* and *Searchlight On The Nations*, reflected some of the lack of confidence which one might expect; but *First Steps*, an inspiring account of the physical and mental rehabilitation of children, was evidence of a solid achievement. The above repertoire was repeated during the second half of the Festival with the noteworthy addition of Henri Storck's *Rubens*, the Norwegian-French *Battle of Heavy Water* and *One Day in the U.S.S.R.*

Summing up briefly, if one may, the points of criticism, there is an immense range in the technical and artistic quality of world documentary. Music, already referred to, is still mistakenly considered indispensable by most directors, and too often appears to rank as compensation for the subject matter. And even when justified, the score is too often a kind of café-music which contributes nothing to the artistic effect—and not infrequently ruins it. Sound tracks generally are congested. The cinema is primarily a visual medium, yet we are rarely permitted to contemplate a picture in silence for more than a few seconds.

Many films lack shape and logical progression. They threaten on a number of occasions to end before they actually do end. Often they are conceited about their capacity for sustaining interest. Brevity should also be the soul of many forms of documentary. This particularly applies to the filmic representation of paintings and other static material.

And in case these concluding remarks appear to suggest disgruntlement, I hasten to thank the Edinburgh Film Guild and other co-operating bodies for a memorable experience. No part of the Edinburgh Festival was more stimulating or truly international.

And finally a great film

RUBENS

described by ROGER MANVELL

THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL was almost over when the message came that the Belgian film about Rubens had at last arrived. We had had a good preparation for this paragon of art films. Storck's previous *World of Paul Delvaux* was a strangely evocative staging of the artist's pictures of dreaming, sensuous women and desiccated men, wandering in a wide and ruined world of unsatisfied desire. The camera constructed a drama out of the flat, canvas images by the process of camera-play, editing, spoken verse and special music. The Italians had sent a whole group of their art films, including a delightful study of sculptured animals

turned into motion by the skilful play of light on to the static activity of their carved limbs, and again by camera-movement round them. An American colour film of an exhibition by Henry Moore held recently in America rotated examples of his sculpture on turntables before the camera (a method, incidentally, commonly used by our television studios for the demonstration of three-dimensional works of art). Henry Moore tells me that he feels this technique destroys the stability, as it were, of a piece of sculpture: the camera, like the viewer, should move round the work. I agree with this point, which is typical of

the many principles of treatment which have yet to be worked out for the art films of the future.

However, none of us were prepared for the elaboration of technique developed by Haesaerts and Storck in their brilliant film on the work of Rubens. I saw it in the beautiful little viewing theatre which the Edinburgh Film Guild have somehow managed to construct since the War, and I sat next to the art critic of "The Scotsman" who was overjoyed with it. In an hour or so, he said, it brought the spirit of Rubens' work to the layman, and did it in a way which created a real emotional understanding of the value behind his pictures.

THE MOOD

The first section of the film was a comparative analysis of Rubens' general style with that of his predecessors. The method is used of placing works by Rubens side by side with those of other artists, each occupying half of the cine-frame, and then pulling in the camera on both images (which were obviously photographed separately and later matched into the cine-frame) when a comparison of details, such as a close-up of the faces in portraits, is required. A Rubens' portrait is placed beside a der Weyden to show the German's fluidity of composition and love of roundness as against his predecessor's angularity of composition. Comparisons are made with a Memling, a Van Eyck and a Bouts all to emphasize the earlier artists' formality and precision of style in contrast to the spontaneity of Rubens. Storck then introduces actuality shots in motion of water, cloud and flame, which he superimposes upon pictures by Rubens which have the same fluidity of movement. He takes details from Rubens and rotates them rapidly to emphasize the roundness of their compositional values. He superimposes circles and ellipses made up of rotating dots to demonstrate points of composition, some of which seemed to me, as they snaked their way in and out of groups in the picture, to be somewhat arbitrary, though there was no doubt at all about the validity of the main argument. Rotating spotlights also emphasized the gyratory movement which is a basic factor in the work of Rubens, centring in several pictures on a small pivot or circle in the midst of the composition, such as an eye, a window, even a navel (*quelquefois Rubens insiste*, as the commentary puts it). Music throughout composed by Chevreuille caught the mood of the pictures or the tone of the commentary, often with touches of humour.

FOUR STAGES

After some brief comments on Rubens' life, a fine reconstruction of his atelier is shown, and portraits of his first and more particularly his second wife discussed. When Storck wishes to pick out elements in Rubens' more elaborate pictures, he first presents this detail in an iris frame in close-up and then throws it back with a swinging

movement until it is in a suitable place and on a suitable scale for the whole picture to be revealed with the detail in correct position. It is at this point that one realises what terrific magnification on the screen any element in Rubens' elaborate works can sustain without loss of value or vitality. After a map of Europe and the Mediterranean has shown something of the artist's travels, his method of work in turning small preliminary designs into very large compositions is shown by diagrams superimposed on a picture of his atelier, while his four removable pictures to be used seasonally over a church altar is also demonstrated, with more than a hint of a parallel to the cinema. The four stages through which his engravings passed from first drawing to the final work is shown by dividing the frame into four quarters and bringing all four images into simultaneous close-ups of the same detail.

There next follows a series of stylistic comparisons in half-frame as before, showing how Rubens takes his place in the chain of artists from Michaelangelo to Renoir, including Veronese, Titian, van Eyck, Jordaens, Delacroix and Watteau.

Rubens' love of luxuriance in all its many forms is next illustrated with an appropriate richness of music in the accompanying score. His generous portraits of women and his constant portrayal of fruit, animals, plate or jewellery are illustrated. The female body is emphasized, using the half-frame technique with a circular movement one side moving upwards as the other slides downwards. Rotating dissolves of nude portraits stress the full and round contours of Rubens' well-proportioned women. The film then shows the variety of expression Rubens achieved in his portrayal of hands, from the tapering delicacy of female fingers to the violent grasping of hands in agony. The half-frame is again used to show studies of men with women, each half-frame replaced not simultaneously but alternately in a developing theme of love-making. After some studies of babies, Rubens' story of Christ is developed into the drama of the Crucifixion, finely linked by the emotion of the musical score. A wonderful series of dissolves presents a series of detailed portraits of Christ's head. The Crucifixion itself is given, I think, an illegitimate climax by the play of lightning and the crash of thunder, turning Rubens' vivid but necessarily static study of Christ's agony momentarily into a kind of melodramatic motion picture. The descent from the Cross is, however, finely handled, using close-ups of heads. Christ is then seen in triumph. A shot of the night-sky with its stars acts as a link into a series of Rubens' studies of the sky, and leads into his terrible picture of the Last Judgment. Here, the camera twists and turns with the bodies of the damned, the rhythms of the music matching its movement.

The concluding section of the film sends the camera drifting over Rubens' sunny countryside with its trees and fields until we come to his curving group of dancers. The camera sways with their dance, and each separate couple is singled out and the suggestion of their movement emphasized by twisting lines or by rotating irises. The Bacchic rout itself comes as a climax to this last demonstration of Rubens' vitality. The film closes with the tracing of the artist's signature, followed by his self-portrait with its composition centred on Rubens' eye.

THE QUARTER IN BRITAIN

By

ARTHUR VESSELO

IT IS CLEAR from the first moment of *Oliver Twist* that Messrs. Lean and Neame have concocted it with the success of *Great Expectations* in the forefront of their minds. Such a success can be a danger as well as an inspiration; and to let the atmosphere of the earlier film extend and obtrude itself into the later, as it does emphatically in the *Oliver Twist* opening sequence, is a cardinal error. These shots of a lonely landscape under a gathering storm—dark clouds sweeping down the sky, boughs straining in the wind, and then a tiny human figure on a hilltop struggling against the elements—are beautifully photographed and admirably cut, and they include incidentally an extreme rarity on the screen, a realistic portrayal of a pregnant woman; but they are hopelessly reminiscent, and they have little or nothing to do with the spirit of the story they are intended to introduce.

In *Great Expectations* this sort of atmosphere was in place, for the book's action is a good deal concerned with the lonely marshes; but the whole essence of *Oliver Twist* lies in its description of the squalor and degradation of pauper and slum life, particularly in London, in the early years of the last century, and it is difficult to see what empty, stormswept landscapes have to do with the matter. They strike a note, indeed, but it is the wrong one. This introductory sequence equates with the first chapter of the book, the chapter about Oliver's birth; but whereas it constitutes approximately one hundred-and-thirtieth part of the book, it is a full twenty-fifth part of the film, or more.

The skill and inappropriateness combined of the opening passages are typical of the film as a whole. Even the choice of this particular book for filming has the twin aspects. *Oliver Twist* is a shrewd choice, not only for its popularity but for something more practical, for its length. Like *Great Expectations*, it is one of the shorter Dickens novels, and does not therefore present so infernally complicated a problem of adaptation as the much longer *Nicholas Nickleby*, for example. On the other hand, if we consider content instead of form, the picture is changed: the immediate polemical issues of *Oliver Twist* are no longer alive in that shape, but they are so essential a part of the story that their deadness makes the screen reconstruction of them seem like a piece of elaborate antiquarianism—which is all that the film is, apart from a bid to recapture the mood of its Dickensian predecessor.

Even one of the shorter Dickens novels requires considerable condensation for filming. The job has been well done, in fact perhaps too well. One of the outstanding qualities of Dickens is the higgledy-piggledy richness of his work, his multitude of people and things and events, his lavish, sometimes grotesque, interminglings of comedy and pathos, of satire and melodrama and white-hot indignation. From this point of view the faults and the virtues of Dickens are all tied up together. But the film has not the room or the power to accommodate all this ramshackle

richness; so that the screen version of *Oliver Twist*, in the very act of condensing and smoothing and straightening out, and doing it extremely skilfully, irons away some of the prime qualities of the book.

Furthermore, there are satirical and other undercurrents in the writing which the screen's concrete images sometimes get but often miss; and the deliberateness of the tempo which Lean affects—very faintly reminiscent of Hitchcock—produce a slowness, at times a heaviness, that is hardly characteristic of Dickens at all. Here again, the overloading of the beginning gives a clue to the errors in approach of the rest.

RED SHOES

In technical performance, including acting (particularly Alec Guinness as Fagin and John Howard Davies as Oliver), there can be little doubt of the film's accomplishment; though with the qualifications that the music is inept and the sets, for all their artifice (or because of it), sometimes smell too strongly of the studio. But the accomplishment has in the end a hollow ring about it, and makes little real sense except as a business-like repetition of a box office triumph. It is to be hoped that the producers can be encouraged to divert their energies from these artistically profitless Dickensian explorations to a more promising field.

Two other production-teams of note figure on the quarter's list—Lauder and Gilliat with *London Belongs To Me* and Powell and Pressburger with *The Red Shoes*. Neither film can fairly be said to be a complete success. *London Belongs To Me*, from Norman Collins' book, suggests by its title an aim which is in fact foreign to it, or which is at any rate unfulfilled: it is in no way a genuine picture of life in London, or in any profoundly recognizable part of London (Lambeth is represented in theory), but boils down simply to a piece of romantic screen melodrama about fun-fairs, cheap night-clubs, car-thieves, sudden death, and the ways of justice. There is also, among other things, some by-play about fake spiritualism, entertainingly adorned by that practised character-actor, Alastair Sim. The tale has been described as "consciously Dickensian" (no relationship with *Oliver Twist*), but the flavour of the film seems rather to be second-hand Wellsian.

The Red Shoes is a much more ambitious venture, no less than an attempt at a full-scale translation of the idiom of ballet into screen terms in glorious Technicolor. The film is impressive in places, even at occasional moments touching brilliance, but at other points it falls far short. It begins very poorly; and the plot, on which so much hinges, is stupid: if the plot were intended to be a modern version

of the fairy-tale of the title, then the intention is quite ineffectively conveyed. What we get is merely the familiar formula of wife torn between husband and career (in this case composer-husband and ballet-dancing career) with tragic results. Some of the best things in the film are certain of the passages—not perhaps all—dealing with backstage activities.

The ballet-material itself, taken as a whole, is frankly a doubtful quantity. However much it may be claimed that the Ballet of the Red Shoes as performed on the screen represents the subjective attitude of the dancer to the music and to her dance, the fact remains that the method has more than a passing resemblance to that of the spectacular Busby Berkeley type dance-sequences of popular tradition, and that the only real novelty (apart from the matter of its being ballet) is in the somewhat recondite references which we are in this case asked to read into the thing.

As for the colour, it is often very fine, but, even forgetting the gory conclusion, it tends to leave behind it—in the reviewer's mind at least—the sensation of a blaze of violent reds and yellows and blues, first and foremost reds. There is a lingering hothouse quality about Technicolor (even the best Technicolor) which it seems difficult to subdue. It is there again in Basil Dearden's *Saraband For Dead Lovers*—a murky story about passion and intrigue at the Court of Hanover at the end of the seventeenth century, from Helen Simpson's book—with the reservation that the most powerful images in this film are those of the sword-fight at the finish, ending with the murder of Königsmark, so that the impression of blood-red left behind is shadowed over to some extent by the darkness in which an important part of that scene is played. As for the psychologically crucial carnival sequence in the middle of the film, it is a failure, giving only the idea of crowded and meaningless repetition in a few constricted yards of studio space.

The colour of the two-and-a-quarter-hour Castleton Knight epic of the XIVth Olympiad is naturally variable, sometimes good and revealing, sometimes poor, and frequently changing, owing to the conditions of production. The chief criticism of this monumental effort is that it lacks a proper balance, devoting far too much time to preliminary matters and to the winter sports at the start and none at all to such events as the Decathlon (except for a bare reference) and the Pentathlon. It holds the interest successfully in places, but is tiring in others.

Apart from the Olympiad opus, it is remarkable (or is it?) that not a film in the quarter's count is without at least one violent death. *My Brother's Keeper* (black-and-white again, directed by Alfred Roome) gives us Jack Warner as a plausible but egomaniacal escaped convict tracked down to his doom by the police. This is a minor film, but it has its points, and cannot be written off quite so hastily as it has been by some. In particular it is valuable for George Cole's convincing character-study as Jack Warner's reluctant, simple-witted accomplice.

Finally there is *Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill*, a transcription of Hugh Walpole's novel about frictions and petty animosities among masters at a boarding school of low repute with a tyrannical Head. Direction is by Lawrence Huntington. It is a pity that the ending is so feeble and unpersuasive, for in its main passages this film succeeds in building up a strong satirical atmosphere. One can believe very well in

these oppressed and frustrated men, hemmed in by their environment and by one another, soured, and with the ideals of their vocation grey and moribund inside them; while at the same time there is a saving light touch to the film which gives relief without contradiction. Both the composite picture and the individual portrayals have some depth and some reality; and Marius Goring as the ageing, overbearing, and pathetic schoolmaster gives a much sounder and more appealing performance than as the juvenile-lead composer of ballet-music and opera in *The Red Shoes*.

PROTEST

TO THE EDITOR, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,—As an American reviewing a book as yet unavailable through a British publisher, Herman G. Weinberg, in my estimation, did my book, "Chaplin: Last of the Clowns," a considerable injustice by not suggesting that critical opinion in the United States is sharply divided on it. Mr. Weinberg's one-sided view is all the more unfortunate since he did not feel he had enough space, apparently, to devote even one sentence to my *thesis*, apart from the Machiavellian "technique" he imputes to me in presenting it.

I imagine there is too little space in your columns for me to attempt to repair Mr. Weinberg's omission of substance, but perhaps you will find it worthwhile to acquaint the readers of SIGHT AND SOUND with the following resumé of representative critical opinions as to the manner and substance of "Chaplin: Last of the Clowns."

In "The New Republic," Siegfried Kracauer attacked the book in a vein similar to Mr. Weinberg's but made some material reservations. Eric Bentley (while not agreeing with my estimate of "Monsieur Verdoux" and questioning my approach as the best one possible) wrote in the New York "Times": "Mr. Tyler's brilliant use of psychology (and psycho-anthropology) goes some way toward explaining the broad symbolic force and extraordinary emotional resonance of Mr. Chaplin's work, and of course it makes 'Chaplin: Last of the Clowns', like Kracauer's 'From Caligari to Hitler' and Mr. Tyler's own previous books, a welcome contribution to intellectual history. The new book is a useful survey of Mr. Chaplin's life in art; it is at once witty and serious and contains sixteen fascinating pages of photographs". "The Nation's" reviewer, going to some length summarizing the contents, declared that I have got at "the still center of Chaplin's character". Iris Barry, Curator of the Film Library, Museum of Modern Art, observed in the columns of the "Herald-Tribune": "Mr. Tyler's poetic analysis of Chaplin's superb comedies will fascinate as well as disturb most readers".

All this is a far cry from Mr. Weinberg's invocation of my "pet obsession" and his grotesquely irrelevant metaphor about the "bulldog" and the "bone".

Yours, etc.,

PARKER TYLER.

THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH FILM

A book review by

JYMPSON HARMAN

Film Critic of the London "Evening News"

EVERYBODY INTERESTED IN THE development of the cinema, either commercially or as an art, must be grateful to the British Film Institute for compiling, practically in the nick of time, the first authenticated history of the British film. More than fifty years have passed since the cinema in this country may be said to have been born. The pioneers worked on haphazard principles, their records were few and scattered; the men who created the cinema passed on or turned to other pursuits. Only a few of the early enthusiasts survive to-day. These and their scanty references have been recruited only just in time to contribute first-hand information to "The History of the British Film."

The fiftieth anniversary of the film two years ago brought home to several of us on the various sub-committees of the Film Institute the urgent need of a responsible history of the cinema in this country. As a result of our anxieties a Research Committee was set up under the chairmanship of the veteran Cecil Hepworth, consisting of another pioneer producer, George Pearson; the indefatigable curator of the National Film Library, Ernest Lindgren; Dr. Roger Manvell and Miss Rachael Low, a young specialist in historical research.

To Miss Low fell the major task of hunting out surviving pioneers, rekindling the dying fires of their memories, and probing the facts in hundreds of documents, old programmes, synopses and other commercial records. It was soon obvious that the mass of information unearthed and cross-checked would provide material for a number of volumes, that it must be presented in concise form and put out volume by volume in order to make it available without too much delay.

THE EARLY DAYS

The first volume of this invaluable record¹ confines itself to the first ten years of the British film. The authors, Miss Low and Dr. Manvell, content themselves with unadorned, non-committal presentation of their facts. The work, it is pointed out, "is intended primarily as a reference book, a brief summary of the findings of some badly needed research." This decision seems to me, as one who has constant need of reference to film facts, an admirable one; a second volume (1906-1914), now nearly ready, is a much bulkier affair and, as the enterprise proceeds, the mass of facts available will grow to dimensions that will make condensation imperative.

¹ "The History of the British Film, 1896-1906." By Rachael Low and Roger Manvell (Allen and Unwin, 1948. 21s.).

The authors must have been gratified to find that their terms of reference did not entail research into the vexed question of who deserves the major credit for inventing the moving picture. But they include an appendix setting out the principal claims and authenticated achievements.

An important section deals with the history of seventeen pioneer companies, including magic names, such as Urban, G. A. Smith, Clarendon, Cricks, Hepworth, Paul, Warwick, Walturdaw and Williamson.

Other chapters are devoted to early film studios, market conditions, showmanship, and there is a large section which deals with the several types of film made by the pioneers of the first ten years and gives the synopses of many early comedies and dramas.

In every case there is an admirable amount of dates and other assurances of authenticity. The volume is also well illustrated by a hundred pictures of posters, programmes and stills from the quaint old films.

Despite the self-imposed austerity of the writers, their book makes fascinating reading, even for those who have little personal recollection of the subject. We learn, for instance, that what are now known as "dolly" or tracking shots were in use by Paul at his New Southgate studio as early as 1899, although the mobile camera was hardly heard of afterwards until the 1920s, when it was employed by German producers.

G. A. Smith took out a patent for double-exposure in 1897 and used it for a vision on *The Corsican Brothers*. Smith was interpolating close-ups in 1900, as distinct from the close-ups which occupied the whole of the film in comedy subjects. It is doubtful, though, if Smith's enterprise takes away from D. W. Griffith the credit for first use of the close-up for essentially dramatic purposes in his true editing of the 1911-1912 period.

The authors have discovered that there was a film studio at the back of the old Tivoli music hall as early as 1897 and that it was probably the first example of Anglo-American production in this country. It was built by the Mutoscope and Biograph Company of America.

For a first attempt at an involved, almost entirely new task, "The History of the British Film" in its first volume strikes me as a remarkable achievement. Such small improvements as one would wish for are obviously in the minds of the authors. As one who saw his first film, (Méliès' *Trip to the Moon*), in 1903 and has been observing and writing on the cinema for nearly thirty-five years, though too lazy to attempt a history of the subject, I am grateful to the Research Committee of the British Film Institute, Miss Low and Dr. Manvell for their efforts in collecting the invaluable information in this work.



Familles de Paraboles

Cantagrel

THE EDUCATIONAL CINEMA IN FRANCE

By

PIERRE MICHAUT

A PATIENT AND PROLONGED EFFORT, based to a large extent on the individual initiative of a few specialists "film teachers", has enabled the educational film to undergo considerable development in France. By producing films themselves and showing them in their own class-rooms, before their own pupils, they have thus perfected a technique for scholars' films as well as a method of using them in tuition. From 1921 onwards, small groups of teachers were formed, which produced films, printed copies and exchanged them among themselves. A solid nucleus of teachers was thus set up, staunch partisans of the educational film; some of them even preferred the educational screen to the blackboard, even to textbooks.

Do not less us be misunderstood. These are not general documentary films, borrowed from business firms, or fragments extracted from large film productions; they are strips, varying in length, but clearly specialised, shown by the master to the class itself in the course of lessons. For them, it is not a matter of adapting the lesson to the film, but of adapting the film to the lesson, illustrating and completing it.

For reasons of cost price, many of these teachers used the 9.5 mm. size of film; such was the "Coopérative interscolaire du Jura", which operated in the eastern departments; Mr. Boyau's group in the Gironde, or that of Mr. Fresnay at Saint-Paul de Vence. In Paris there was an association of amateur film producers, which had set up a small film library.

THE PIONEERS

These experiments and efforts soon resulted in certain achievements which were on a very high level, and a number of figures emerged who still to-day are among the foremost producers of educational films in France: Mr. Jean Brérault, then teacher in a school for young boys in rue de Marseille, Paris; Mr. Marc Cantagrel, professor at the Commercial High School; Mr. Ponchon, professor of mathematics and physics at the Collège Chaptal; Miss Vergez-Tricom, elementary school inspector. Mr. Brérault had found that the vast majority of Paris children were unfamiliar with the sea, so that they formed a very inadequate conception of the geography teaching which he gave in class about tides, the action of waves, erosion, the formation of estuaries and river mouths. He made the first film *The Sea* with a few fragments of yellowing film and a borrowed camera. With this first film, which was of course succinct and of little technical worth, he obtained remarkable results, which encouraged him to persevere. In 1929, with the assistance of Mr. Jean Benoit-Levy, the documentary film producer (at present head of the Film Division of UNO), he produced *Idea of a Map* to show how, by mounting in a captive balloon, the appearance of the countryside gradually becomes simplified and how the conventional markings on

geographical maps are justified. The demonstration was made particularly telling by repeated references from the photo to the diagram. This film may be regarded as the first rational attempt at an educational film in France. It illustrates and completes the master's lesson, giving him assistance in the form of original methods of presentation and demonstration, which only the cinema can do.

After this, Mr. Jean Brérault threw himself into the production of school films. The celebrated Bernard Natan, who was for a time the very active and enterprising head of the Pathé Company, called him and offered to produce a series of educational films himself. Various changes then came about, but Mr. Brérault continued his film productions. Up to the present, he is the author of over fifty educational films, of which we may mention: *How the Steam Engine Works*, *Archimedes' Principle*, *Atmospheric Pressure*, *How the Suction Pump Works*, etc., to which should be added the *Coasts of France* series (4 films), *Rivers of France* (4 films), *Mountains of France* (3 films), *North Africa* (relief, coasts, hydrography—3 films), and also *The Internal Combustion Engine*, *The Canals*, *Levers*, *A Commercial Port*, etc.

From 1925 onwards, Mr. Cantagrel, with two of his colleague professors at the Commercial High School, wished to use the cinema in the class-room; his two colleagues were Mr. Ferrand, professor at the Commercial High School of Marseille and Mr. Ferdinand Meyer, professor at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales at Paris. As they only found "in the trade" insufficiently specialised films for the particular subjects of their work, they considered making the films they required themselves. It transpired that Mr. Cantagrel, who quickly became versed in the technicalities of the cinema, had a real "cinema sense", a very reliable artistic taste, and a sense of motion and rhythm. He is a distinguished film teacher; his films, which are based on a perfect method of teaching, are likewise perfect film successes.

He is now the author of over fifty films. Let us mention *The Glassworks* (1500 metres), *Malthouse and Brewery* (1400 metres), *Manufacture of Metallurgical Coke* (750 metres), *Mechanical Tile Production*; these films, which are highly remarkable owing to their masterly accuracy, quickly attracted the attention of certain big industrial circles. Thus he was asked to produce for the Westinghouse Company his film on the *Continuous Compressed Air Brake* (2200 metres), which consists entirely of animated diagrams and is a film masterpiece. This film was made in 1935 and has since been used, in France and in many European countries, as an essential element for the fundamental teaching given to young railwaymen and factory workers. It is used by the Westinghouse branches in Belgium, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Roumania, Bulgaria, Poland and Spain; when it was shown in Britain, before an audience of railway officials, it was received with enthusiasm and an offer was made to Mr. Cantagrel to produce a Franco-British film on the loco-

motive. Figures clearly indicate the extent of its present use: since 1944 the French State Railways have ordered 10 fresh copies to replace copies that have gradually become worn out. The brochure handed to workmen and railwaymen, after the film has been shown, is distributed at the rate of 2,000 copies per month!

RAILWAYS AND MATHEMATICS

Mr. Cantagrel has produced a certain number of films for the French railways: *The Locomotive Test-bench at Vitry-sur-Seine*; *In Forty-Nine Days*, being a report in the form of a documentary film of the high-speed repairs to the large viaduct of Chaumont (Paris-Strasbourg line), as soon as the Germans had withdrawn from the region; he is also responsible for *Workshop Repair Accounts for the P.O. Rolling Stock*, *Rational Organisation of Work in a Non-Mass Production Factory*. He is also the author of films on *Low Temperature Industry*, *Milk Industry*, *Cardboard and Asbestos Paper*. Larousse, the educational publishers, ordered from him before the last war a series of elementary education films: *The Movements of Bodies*, *The Three States of Substances*, *Air*, *Water*, *Active Combustion*, etc. For a time he was the director of the Centre de Réalisation de films scientifiques du Conservatoire national des Arts et Métiers, where he produced a film on designing, cutting and aligning gear, a second one on centrifugal force, and a third on clocks, intended for secondary tuition.

More recently, he has launched some new films: one illustrating a lesson on the metallurgy of iron; contribution to the study of the steam engine (diagrams); for the French rubber industry he has produced in recent years: *Rubber: the Chief Stages of its Transformation into the Finished Article*; *Rubber, Rubber Material*, and finally, a summary of these two films, designed for the professional training of employees in tyre firms: *Elastic Matters*.

For the Ministry of National Education he has produced three mathematical films: *Regular Polygons*; *Families of Straight Lines*; *Families of Parabolas*; he is at present preparing *Elementary Geometric Loci*. This recital does not exhaust the complete list of the cinema works of Mr. Marc Cantagrel, who thus covers elementary, secondary, technical and professional training. We must not omit to mention his collaborator for the animated drawings and diagrams, Mr. L. Motard.

MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC

From the repertory of French pedagogical films, which amounts to some 200 titles, let us mention a few more outstanding works: *Mountains and Limestone Plateaux* by Mrs. Vergez-Tricom; *The Vosges Mountain System* by Mr. Colin; *Comedy Before Molière* by Jean Tedesco (attempt to teach literature by the film); Mr. Ponchon's series: *Uniform Rectilinear Movement*, *Variable Rectilinear Movement*, *Uniform Circular Movement*, *Curvilinear Movement*, *Acceleration*, *Sine-form Movement*, *the Motor-car Differential*. Mr. Marcel Ichac (who, moreover, specialises in snow and ice sports films and in mountaineering), is undertaking the production of a series of technical films for the professional training of French aluminium workers: *Aluminium Welding*, *Aluminium Brazing*, *Aluminium in Rural Electrification*, etc.

Mention must also be made of medical and surgical educational films, which are very numerous and often great successes: the series by Mr. Jean Benoit-Levy, is by now old, with *Bronchoscopy* of Prof. Léon Bernard & Soule; *Appendicectomy* and *Operation of Cancer of the Breast* by Prof. Gosset; *Biopsy* by Prof. Roussy and R. Leroux. These talking films recorded, by way of commentary, the talk by Mr. Roger Leroux, professor of pathological anatomy, who every year makes a film in the small laboratory which he has himself fitted up at the Faculty of Medicine at Paris. Among these we may mention *Tuberculosis*, *Skin Wounds*.

In certain establishments for secondary education, films are used which come under the heading of "scientific"—real "scientific documents", of which great use can be made for teaching certain specialised subjects. Such are the microfilm recordings made by Dr. Comandon, head of the film department of the Pasteur Institute (studies of the living cell, its growth and cellular division), or the shots made by Mr. Bernard Lyot, astronomer, at the observatory of Pic du Midi, during which he filmed solar prominences

and various phenomena affecting the chromosphere, and also the planet Mars. Again, there are some recordings of engineering, aerodynamics, and ballistics, made by the stroboscopic system of the Séguin brothers, supplemented by General Libessart's method, which makes it possible to take pictures in the millionth, the hundred millionth and billionth of a second.

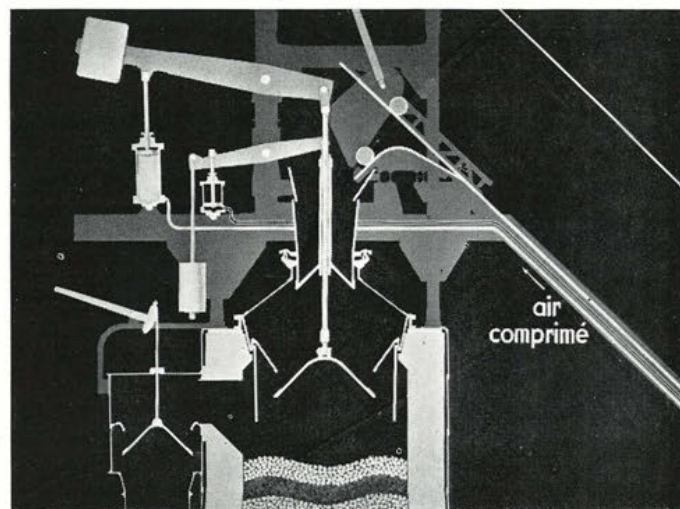
We have not mentioned in this report anything concerned with the documentary film or the film for the propagation of knowledge intended for cinema audiences, from which, under certain conditions, masters and professors may derive inspiration. Some of these are quite outstanding, such as the films of Mr. Jean Painlevé on the sea-urchin and the sea-horse, but they do not come within the narrow definition which we established at the outset. All the same, his film on the fourth dimension, from a setting by Mr. de Sainte-Laguë, professor of Mathematics in the mathematical section of the Palace of Discoveries, is an educational film. In like manner, certain films in the series *In Three Minutes* made by the Atlantic Films Company, although intended for public exhibition, are true educational films, such as *A Walk in the Moon*, *The Solar System*, *The Seasons*, *The Discobolus*, *The Automatic Telephone*, etc. However, we should depart too much from the limits we have set ourselves and this article would be unending!

THE MUSÉE PEDAGOGIQUE

Let us add, in conclusion, that these efforts and initiatives centre round the Musée Pédagogique in Paris. Two Commissions set up by the Ministry of National Education and presided over by Mr. Henri Wallon, handle problems arising from school films: there is a technical commission which deals with the question of the right apparatus for equipping the schools, and a pedagogical commission, which looks after film production. The latter comprises as many sub-commissions as there are special school subjects—elementary, kindergarten, secondary, etc., and likewise medical, physical, professional training, mathematics, geography, etc.

Last year, the list drawn up by the pedagogical commission referred to over thirty films, but considerations of budget economy have greatly reduced this activity; the greater part of the sums allocated to the teaching film has been taken up by the increase in the estimates of films previously made. It is anticipated that the same will hold good this year; the increased estimates and the printing of copies of the films already in existence, drain this modest budget.

The Pedagogical Commission has drawn up the programme for 1948 as follows: *Elementary Geometric Loci* (Marc Cantagrel); *Mechanical Properties of Metals and Alloys* (technique of resistance tests); *Study of Perspective and Elements of Musical Education* (Fine Arts tuition); *The Profession of the Expert Geometrician and Professional Training* (technical tuition); *Principle of Direct Current Generators*.



La Metallurgie du fer

Finally, there is another aspect of the problem: how many apparatus are there at present in use in schools? Statistics are unfortunately rather unreliable. In 1934-36 there were still a large number of 35 mm. cameras, most of them of the silent type, and it was estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 were capable of working properly. Since then, a large number of these cameras have become useless, owing to lack of maintenance, spare parts, etc., or else have fallen into disuse. Moreover, quite recently, the 17.5 mm. size has been abandoned and the number of apparatus of that type was considerable; there are likewise a large number of 9.5 mm. apparatus which are the property of the masters, but the supply of this size is rather uncertain as regards the teaching value of the films. The school size tends to become fixed at 16 mm., and it is estimated that the number of apparatus of this size runs into several thousand. A further factor which makes it possible to appreciate the real importance of the pedagogical cinema is the circulation figure in the film libraries of Paris and the large provincial centres. Paris comes under the jurisdiction of the Seine film library, which represents one-seventh of the total activities of the pedagogical cinema in France, owing to the number of children, the number of schools and sessions. The film library comprises four services: loans of films and slides; teaching service (special sessions in schools, pedagogical experiments relating to the use of films, enquiry into the results); educational film centres, at the rate of one centre per district in Paris and per municipality in the department of Seine (when the establishment of the Centres is complete, they will number one hundred); technical service, which looks after the apparatus and films.

During the academic year 1946-47, the number of children attending school sessions was 63,000, and during the year 1946-47,

152,000. This represents 400 school sessions, to which 166 "peri-scholastic" sessions and 135 additional sessions may be added. In the department of Seine, the number of apparatus available in schools must be in the region of 150, both 35 and 16 mm. film, and sometimes 9.5 and 8 mm. film as well. The Seine film library has three portable 16 mm. equipments and two 35 mm. equipments, which are available for showing films, as requested, in schools which do not possess one of their own. At the headquarters in the rue Robert Etienne, off the Champs-Élysées, there is also a hall with projector cabin.

Another very active organisation is the National Federation for the Educational Film, which comprises the greater part of the film producers and those who make use of them. In the course of the past year, this organisation has provided a number of informative sessions for teaching staffs in provincial towns, and its propaganda is effective; these sessions have been given at Amiens, Lyon, Grenoble, Quimper, Albi and Alsace. In Paris, some twenty sessions have been arranged, with programmes consisting of recent French and foreign films, either of a pure pedagogical nature, or else largely educational and documentary. It purchases films and distributes them among those concerned. The number of films lent was 970 last year, as against 430 during the previous year. It publishes a specialised journal, "Films et Documents", which is an important and efficient means of maintaining relations.

To ensure the decisive progress of school films, schools must be properly equipped, and the organisation for the pedagogical use of the film must also be laid down, taking as basis the results achieved by the "pioneers", such as Bréault, Cantagrel, Ponchon, etc., whom we have mentioned above, thus giving official status to the method of using this new aid to teachers.

THE CINEMA HOUR IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

By

C. DENNIS PEGGE

(Chairman of the Cambridge University Films Council)

BROADLY SPEAKING, there seem to be two main ways of using films in University teaching. Firstly, the film may be used as an integral part of a lecture, illustrating the lecture directly and dominated by the lecturer's presence. Secondly, films may be shown in a separate cinema period. Probably the most valuable educational method is the first. But the provision of separate cinema periods is suitable for the showing of what may be termed "background" films, and also for practical reasons connected with projection, black-out, etc., it may be convenient to show films in that way.

In October, 1944, the experiment of providing cinema periods in the regular time-table of all 1st Year students of the Cambridge University Engineering Department was tried. It was considered that these "cinema hours" served a useful purpose; and since October, 1945, 2nd Year as well as 1st Year students have had a "cinema hour" per week as part of their regular time-table.

It is believed that a few observations based on the experience of these courses and a list of the films shown for 1947-48 may be of some interest, not only for teachers of engineering but also for teachers of other subjects for which the "cinema hour" method might be applied, as well as for those interested in a general way with the use of films in University education.

An extensive search for reasonably suitable material was found to be necessary. Up to the present about 350 films have been viewed. At the start there were found to be hardly any engineering films made for the University student. The position has not materially altered since then. There are, however, a great number of films of engineering interest. Many of these are films for the general public, and usually therefore somewhat superficial in their approach.

Another large class consists of films made for the operator of a machine or a process, excellent for their purpose but sometimes too particularised for the University student. Nevertheless the films selected and shown have been generally recognised to have educational value. They have provided visual experience of engineering processes, projects, and so on, which could not otherwise at the University have been obtained.

JUSTIFIED

The educational value of a film is clearly greatly increased if its subject matter has been considered in lectures beforehand. An aim in the courses has been to link up the films shown with the subject-matter of the existing lectures and laboratory work—so far as the limitations of the film supply allow. The process of bringing about this desirable result is gradual, and the result has been achieved at present far more in the first year cinema course than the second. In one or two instances it has been possible to use films for providing a preliminary demonstration before laboratory work. For example, students—who have been required to strip a Diesel engine early in their first year—have received some first introduction to the principle and parts of the Diesel engine through the cinema course. Many "background" films in relation to lectures on materials have been shown.

Modern society is so closely bound up with the services of the engineer that the inclusion occasionally of sociological films has seemed fully justified. Most of these films have been directly

connected with engineering or allied subjects such as town-planning, but not always. This inclusion may illustrate an important function that the "cinema hour" in University education can serve. It is possible through films to introduce subjects desirable for the students to consider, but which cannot conveniently be fitted into the lecture courses. For example, architecture and the aesthetics of design, workshop management, and the economics of production, lie close to if not within the borders of engineering. It might be considered desirable for the agricultural student to see some films dealing with engineering, biology outside his normal course, with the food industry, civic organisation, and social problems. Clearly in most subjects there exists matter on the fringes, which in some cases might conveniently be introduced through films.

The cinema periods have been called "cinema hours", but, up to the present, the average time of a period has been about 45 minutes.

The films have been spliced together, and projected as far as possible without intervening "light-up" periods.

Brief verbal introductions have been given. A main attempt in these has been to relate the particular subject matter of the films to the general field of engineering, as well as to indicate any connections with the lectures and laboratory work.

After an initial warning as to the limitations of the available supply, and an expression of the hope that the films would nevertheless prove not only interesting but of educational use, the students have been asked to give a "show of hands" vote—good, satisfactory, or poor—for each film. This they have done, allowing a rough but useful check to be kept.

At the end of the Lent Term, 1945, a Questionnaire was submitted to the students on the first year cinema course they had attended. On this occasion the audience numbered about 150, out of a maximum possible audience of about 200. 132 filled in the Questionnaire. To the question "Have you found the programmes interesting?" 129 answered "Yes". To the question "Have you found the programmes instructive?" 126 answered "Yes". To the third question regarding the time-length of a programme, the majority were in favour of a greater length than 40 minutes. 36 were in favour of 60 minutes. 69 added comments in the space provided in the Questionnaire; a demand for films combining sociology and engineering being expressed in 17 cases. A Questionnaire—of more particularised character—on both the second and first year cinema courses was submitted to some of the students at the end of the Lent Term, 1946.

SOUND OR SILENT?

During the Lent Term of 1946 the silent film *Hypocyclic Motion* was shown unaccompanied. This was followed by the silent film *Mouvements Vibratoires*, accompanied by what seemed appropriate music for the first half of its length, but purposely left unaccompanied for the remainder of its length. During the short "light-up" interval which followed, the two films were voted respectively B— and B+. It was then pointed out that *Mouvements Vibratoires* had been shown partly with and partly without accompaniment. The question was asked whether accompaniment had allowed better attention to be paid to the film. About 65 per cent. of the audience put up their hands to signify that it had.

The vast majority of the films shown in the courses have been sound films, and in the greater proportion of these the sound track has been that of speech commentary. A few short silent films have been included, and these—with the exception of the instance mentioned above—have been shown without musical accompaniment. The silent film *The Failure of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge*—after a short introduction shown without accompaniment—has been one of the most appreciated films.

The predominant use of sound films providing speech commentary reflects on the nature of the present film supply. It does not indicate a conviction that the best use of the sound-track for educational films is in all cases to provide commentary. Considering two elements of film, the visual and that of speech, the first is a unique contribution, the second largely supplies what lectures and books can supply. The first provides direct knowledge of reality, the second that symbolic and literal analysis of our knowledge of reality constituting the vast bulk of normal education—that side

of education which it is surely the function of visual aids to complement. Because the visual element is the unique contribution of film to teaching, it would seem of the two elements considered the more important. This being admitted, then the sound track should ideally be designed to allow the maximum of attention to be paid to the visual element.

OR MUTE?

Some will believe that this result may best be obtained through the complete elimination of sound track. In this connection it will be remembered that many teachers at present cut out sound-track, or use silent unaccompanied films, supplying their own introduction and any commentary they consider necessary—a suitable method where a film forms an integral part of a class or lecture, but not suitable where the film is itself to play a self-sufficient and primary role. Others will believe that a sound track employing words sparingly need not lead to a loss of visual attention, and even that words may be used to accent visual points. Others again will believe that written titles can with most effect supply all the literal indication that is required, and that a sound track providing an appropriate musical accompaniment—and using sound effects in some cases—will ensure maximum visual attention, and that such a film may in some conditions—as, for example, those of a cinema hour—be well suited for educational purposes.

It has to be remembered that in the commercial cinema silent films have always been accompanied by music. One of the functions of that music has been to maintain visual attention. Appropriate music has often been described as music that is not noticed. In one of the Questionnaires the comment was made, "critics of musical accompaniment can be ignored—as can the music".

Considering the film as a visual medium, that medium is of use in education from its most rudimentary to its most developed form, the "animated lantern slide" as well as Pudovkin's *The Mechanism of the Brain*. Indeed, the rudimentary use—or mere provision of moving photographs—will probably remain of first importance in advanced education. Because of this variation, and because of the varying conditions under which films may be shown in education, no hard-and-fast rule can be laid down as to whether ideally the sound track should yield silence, speech commentary, or music. But on account of the considerations given above, there seems a strong case for making some educational films with written titles, and appropriate musical accompaniments.

Before leaving the subject of the sound-track, a few less controversial matters may be mentioned. The quality of sound reproduction from 16 mm. prints does not seem very satisfactory. If attention to speech is regarded as something detracting from attention to sight, then this effect is much aggravated when the ears are kept continually strained in an attempt to hear what is said—and when then many words and even sentences remain beyond determination. This has been a frequent experience with 16 mm. prints. Again—whatever opinion is held as to sound-track—most educationists will agree that the volume of sound should be kept as low as possible. The voice of a commentator should not be louder than that of a normal lecturer. Anything louder than this has a wearing physical effect. Also, whether commentary or music is preferred, nearly all will agree that both together are undesirable.

SUBJECTS SHOULD LINK

Specific instruction divorced from the subject matter of current lectures is not responded to very well in a cinema period. If unconnected with lecture subject-matter, a film using diagrams, working models and commentary to explain in detail a piece of apparatus or machinery—however self-sufficient and good the film may be—does not seem to gain proper appreciation. For this reason the film *Single Jet Fuel Injector* was not included in a cinema period. It was, however, shown to advanced students in conjunction with a lecture, with success.

In a lecture, as a rule the presence of the lecturer should continue to be dominating during the showing of films. Partial black-out—or if attainable daylight projection—is desirable. But for the cinema hour the screen has to take charge. The black-out must be perfect, the picture brilliant, the sound distinct but of low volume. No "hitches" should occur. The importance of efficient arrangements and an alert technically-minded projectionist cannot be overestimated.

It is known that there is a two hour film session every week in connection with the fourth year medical class in Public Health and Social Medicine at the Usher Institute, Edinburgh University. These sessions to some extent take the place of visits to institutions of public health interest. It would be valuable to know of other examples of the "cinema hour" in Universities. Agriculture, Anthropology, Engineering, Estate Management, Colonial Administration, Geography, Biology, Medicine, are all subjects for which films might be shown by this method—in addition to the lecture method. The Economics student might see films of industrial processes and of social problems through its means, the student of Modern Languages foreign talking films, the student of History "background" films like *The Fall of St. Petersburg* as well as films of historically important crafts. Books are generally available to the student. Films of academic value should also, it would seem, be made by some means available—so far as such films exist.

But a main experience of the courses—on which all these observations are based—confirms that there is at present a lack of films made for the University student. It would seem that this situation is only likely to be bettered when the Universities themselves undertake the making of films, and when, like the University Presses for the production of books, there are analogously University Presses for the production of films. As with their books the Universities might thus perform a service not only for themselves, but for the community at large.

The films shown in the cinema courses during 1947-48 are listed below. The hand vote classification is not, of course, to be taken as reflecting on the intrinsic merits of any film, but as an indication of that film's suitability for a special audience. Where this classification has been assumed from the audience's general response, it has been put in brackets. The Letter L denotes that a film links with the lectures or laboratory work.

Title	Silent Sound	Hand Vote	Link with Lectures etc.
FIRST YEAR—MICHAELMAS TERM, 1947			
1. <i>Diesel Engine</i>	sd		L
<i>How to File</i>	sd		
<i>Transfer of Power</i>	sd		
2. <i>Construction of Diesel Engines</i>	sd	B+	L
<i>Plain Turning—lathe</i>	sd	B+	L
<i>Pipeline</i>	sd	B	
3. <i>Turret Lathes</i>	sd	B+	L
<i>Manufacture of Gas</i>	sd	B	
<i>Smoke Menace</i>	sd	B	
4. <i>Buried Treasure—coal-mining</i>	sd	A	
<i>Reduction of Gross Sample—coal</i>	st	C	
<i>Side Launch</i>	st	B+	
5. <i>First Principles of the Petrol Engine</i>	sd	5—	L
<i>Drilling for Oil</i>	sd	A	
<i>Pipeline and Crude Oil Storage</i>	sd	B	
6. <i>Quality Steel Making</i>	sd	A	L
7. <i>Mouvements Vibratoires</i>	st	B	L
<i>Magic in Metal—casting of car cylinder block</i>	sd	B+	L
<i>Town and Country Planning</i>	sd	B	
8. <i>The Bailey Bridge</i>	sd	B+	
<i>The City—film essay on the need for town-planning</i>	sd	A	

FIRST YEAR—LENT TERM, 1948			
1. <i>Power Lines—cable manufacture</i>	sd	B	
<i>Aircrew—principle and manufacture</i>	sd	B+	
2. <i>Locking Devices</i>	sd	B	
<i>Looking Through Glass—glass manufacture</i>	sd	A	
<i>Soil Erosion</i>	sd	A	
3. <i>Combustion and Chain Grate Stoker</i>	sd	A	L
<i>Tube Wells</i>	sd	B	
4. <i>Generation of Gear Teeth</i>	sd	A	L
<i>Castings—Hiduminium Aluminium Alloys</i>	sd	B	L
5. <i>Making and Shaping of Steel—refining steel</i>	sd	B	L
<i>Forging of Hiduminium Aluminium Alloys</i>	sd	A	L
6. <i>Heat Treatment of Aluminium Alloys</i>	sd	A—	L
<i>Hydraulics</i>	sd	C+	L
<i>We Live In Two Worlds</i>	sd	B	

7. <i>General Sheet Metal Practice</i>	sd	B	
<i>Springs—car suspension system</i>	sd	B	L
<i>Surface Tension</i>	sd	A	
8. <i>How to Rivet Aluminium</i>	sd	B+	
<i>An English Oilfield</i>	sd	B	

SECOND YEAR—MICHAELMAS TERM, 1947

1. <i>Diesel Engine</i>	sd	B+	
<i>Down to Earth—aircraft equipment manufacture</i>	sd	B	
2. <i>Sheet Glass</i>	sd	A—	
<i>Tractor Engine Overhaul</i>	sd	B	
3. <i>Construction of E.C.2 Liberty Ships</i>	sd	B	
<i>Prevention and Control of Distortion in Arc Welding</i>	sd	B+	
4. <i>World of Plenty</i>	sd	B+	
5. <i>Civil Engineering</i>	sd	B—	
<i>Bridging San Francisco Bay</i>	sd	B+	
<i>New Mine</i>	sd	A—	
6. <i>Ace of Blades—wooden airscrew</i>	sd	B—	
<i>Steel—Man's Servant</i>	sd	B+	
7. <i>Mechanics of the Voussoir Arch</i>	st	C	
<i>Concrete Testing</i>	st	C	L
<i>Mosquitoes in the Making</i>	sd	A—	
<i>Roadways Across Britain</i>	sd	A—	
8. <i>Pennsylvania Turnpike</i>	sd	B+	L
<i>Valley of the Tennessee</i>	sd	A	

SECOND YEAR—LENT TERM, 1948

1. <i>Pressure Grouting of Railway Track</i>	sd	B+	L
<i>Britain Can Make It—ordnance survey</i>	sd	B	
<i>Thru' the Mill—steel pipe manufacture</i>	sd	A	
2. <i>Sideways Launch</i>	st	B	
<i>Pluto—Job 99</i>	sd	A	
3. <i>Generation of Gear Teeth</i>	sd	A—	
<i>Atomic Hydrogen Welding</i>	sd	B	
4. <i>Combustion and the Chain Grate Stoker</i>	sd	A—	
<i>The Story of A.C. Arc Welding</i>	sd	C+	
5. <i>Visualised Aerodynamics</i>	st	B+	
<i>The Making and Shaping of Steel—wire and pipe making</i>	sd	B	
<i>U.S.—reels 3 and 4</i>	sd	A—	
6. <i>The German A4 Rocket</i>	sd	A	
7. <i>Streamlined Colour—painting of aircraft</i>	sd	B—	
<i>An English Oilfield</i>	sd	B	
8. <i>The Failure of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge</i>	st	(A)	
<i>Waterworks</i>	sd		
<i>All Eyes on Britain</i>	sd	C+	

NEW LONDON FILM SOCIETY

The New London Film Society announces that it has strengthened its Council and Officers. Mr. Paul Rotha has been made President and Mr. John Grierson joins Miss Dilys Powell and Miss Iris Barry as a Vice-President. Plans are being worked out to make the Society into a London shop-window for outstanding films both new and old, a policy which used to be that of the old Film Society from 1925 till 1939. Among new films for this current season is likely to be Pabst's *The Trial*, a film about anti-semitism recently completed in Vienna, which was accorded great praise at the Venice Film Festival. Among old films, which to many people are just names, will be Dovjenko's famous *Earth* and Fritz Lang's *Siegfried*. The first two programmes have already been held and subscriptions for the remainder of the season, another ten performances, are reduced. Particulars may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, New London Film Society, 4, St. James's Place, S.W.1.

NEW BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

Il Linguaggio Del Film, by Renato May (Milan, Poligono, 1947).

This ambitious analysis of the fundamental principles of film technique follows avowedly in the Arnheim-Spottiswoode train (though it is true that to the second the author's allegiance is a little half-hearted). The book is no less than an attempt to classify, sub-classify and fully schematise all the main bases of camera-work and editing, so as to elicit a series of essential and incontrovertible laws of film-making. To this end it is composed in the matter-of-fact, authoritative style of a *liceo*, or university textbook, and is liberally interspersed with complicated-looking diagrams.

It is perhaps hardly appropriate to the book's comprehensive aims that sound is given only the scantiest of attention in the context. But the fact is that, apart from any particular inadequacies, the whole method is open to the gravest of doubt. The minute pigeon-holing of technical possibilities into exactly-defined categories, however fascinating, has little or no genuine relationship to the construction of a valid aesthetic. As proof one may cite the example of the author's prime mentor, Rudolf Arnheim, who in "Film als Kunst" undertakes an examination of the sort with the most profound Teutonic thoroughness for the purpose of demonstrating a set of largely erroneous conclusions.

The author's sincerity and devotion to his task are beyond question and his propositions clearly laid out; but the enthusiastic film-society member should beware of being so far impressed by the author's dialectic elaboration as to attribute to his findings (not all of them accurate, even within their own field) more than a limited significance.

ARTHUR VESSELO.

Louis Lumière, Inventeur, by Maurice Bessy and Lo Duca. (Paris, Prisma, 1948).

A life of Lumière is inevitably in some sort a history of the early cinema. The authors have avoided the perils of partisanship and, while giving Lumière his undoubted place as Father of the Cinema, they have not hesitated to state categorically that he was 'not the first to effectuate the analysis of movement, nor its synthesis; not the inventor of film, nor its intermittence, nor its perforation... Even the word cinematograph is not his, having been fabricated... by Léon Bouly.' Nevertheless his place is supreme. He it was who resolved the ideas and suggestions which had been current for 50 years and in one over-riding invention turned them into something which is to all intents and purposes the modern cinema as we know it to-day. It is astounding that Lumière should in its initial stages so fully have comprehended not only the technical problems of the cinema—his work on sound, colour and relief shows him reaching well out into the future—but also its artistic, social and entertainment potentialities. The early catalogues pro-

vide examples of all types of film, the documentary, news, religious, travel, fantasy, as well as the ubiquitous feature film, mainly represented by farcical episodes or historical scenes.

And how much work this indefatigable inventor has done on other subjects, both allied and unrelated! Who remembers now his *Photorama*; or how many millions, who owe their bi-weekly entertainment to his researches, ever realise that he is the inventor also of an artificial hand? Louis Lumière is the living embodiment of the dictum that genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains, but are we to take *au grand sérieux* his stricture on his most wayward but most dominating creation; "If I could have foreseen what it would come to, I would never have invented it"?

This interesting and well-written book has a bibliography and a series of excellent plates, among them excerpts from the unissued film, *Violons d'Ingres*.

NORAH LEWIS.

Traité Général de Technique du Cinéma. Vol. I. Historique et Développement de la Technique Cinématographique, by Jean Vivié. (Paris, B.P.I., 1946).

This is an historical survey of the invention and subsequent development of the various technical processes and apparatus of film production. It is intended as a background to contemporary technical problems which will be treated in eleven further volumes.

The present volume, however, is of fairly general interest. It describes the many lines of experiment that led to the invention of the cinematograph, and traces the development of film industries in various countries up to the present day. Important advances such as the introduction of sound and colour and the evolution of animated cartoons are also discussed.

Since no historical account is definitive, it is reasonable that the author, while attempting an international survey, is most accurate and informative when describing the work of his compatriots. It is not easy to see, however, why he should dismiss the pioneer work of Friese-Greene in a few lines, while according Edison's less aggressive activities undue prominence. No mention is made of Friese-Greene's successful lawsuit against Edison in connection with his important British patent of June 21st, 1889. Only in a less comprehensive work would such omissions be excusable.

Elsewhere the author's record is also misleading. For instance, when writing of "trick" films possessing technical interest, he discusses the work of Méliès and then passes on to *The Ten Commandments*, (1924). Surely films such as *Rescued From an Eagle's Nest*, (1907), and *Nosferatu*, (1922), to suggest but two, deserve to be mentioned.

It will be found, however, that the book covers a great deal of ground in as

orderly a manner as the typography allows. The many illustrations from early catalogues, archives and private collections would alone merit its publication.

COLIN BORLAND.

Filmstrips, by Vera M. Falconer. (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1948, 5 dollars).

The aim of this book is stated to be "to provide in one place all the information that can be useful to those interested in using filmstrips as a part of group activity." The author discusses the nature of the filmstrip medium of mass communication, provides a full technical description of sound and silent filmstrips, offers criteria for the selection of filmstrips for specific teaching purposes, suggests ways of using filmstrips in schools, gives guidance in the selection and use of projectors and finally lists with descriptive notes some 3,000 filmstrips available from American sources. There is little doubt that the aim of the book has been achieved for American readers.

Although the catalogue of American filmstrips—which occupies more than four hundred pages—is of little use to English teachers who are denied access to them, the book as a whole is not without considerable value. The first hundred pages provide a reliable practical guide to the use of the filmstrip medium for teaching purposes based on long actual experience.

Filmstrip is presented as "the happy medium" visual aid; not so effective in many directions as the cinema film but much less expensive, possessing all the advantages of still pictures but less laborious to use and maintain than a collection of graphic materials.

The suggestions for the use of the medium in teaching are excellent. There is nothing hypothetical or idealistic about them. They are very obviously the outcome of practical teaching experience. They dispose immediately of any idea that there is any "trick" in the successful use of filmstrip. Best results are obtained when they are applied in the same manner as the effective teacher uses other teaching aids. There is a very proper emphasis on the needs for pupil participation in lessons and verbal expression.

On the appraisal of filmstrips for teaching purposes the author has much to say which some of our own reviewers would do well to read. She maintains that the abstract evaluation of filmstrips is impossible. Technical quality, factual accuracy and organisation of material can be assessed by others but appropriateness and value for any specific teaching purpose with a given class can only be judged by the teacher of that class.

For a hundred pages of sound advice the book is recommended to English teachers and for those who seek knowledge of the resources of America in filmstrip here is a veritable mine of information.

F. E. FARLEY.

Visitation: the Film Story of the Medical Missionaries of Mary, by Andrew Buchanan. (Catholic Film Society, 1948, 5s.).

Pius XI in his encyclical, *Vigilanti Cura*, enunciated the principle that "the motion picture should not be simply a means of diversion, a light relaxation to occupy an idle hour; with its magnificent power, it can and must be a bearer of light and a positive guide to what is good." It is apparent from Mr. Buchanan's book that the film, *Visitation*, has fully realised these possibilities. Much the same may be said of the book itself: it is both diverting and a bearer of light. Its contents are arranged under two sections, interspersed by a number of reproductions of photographs and stills.

Part One provides an account of the making of the film. Perhaps the most interesting paragraphs are those which deal with the difficulties of filming in the Nigerian Bush, which included the absence of electric illumination, (necessitating the use of sun reflectors, and, on several occasions, the removal of roofs), the presence of leprosy and the need for avoiding infection. During the course of his narrative Mr. Buchanan advances a number of principles relative to the making of documentary films in general, and religious films in particular, which are at once both stimulating and constructive.

In Part Two the birth and growth and graciousness of the Congregation of the Medical Missionaries of Mary is translated from the medium of images and traced in that of words. The heroine of this story is revealed as the Lady Charity, sister of the that Lady Poverty, who became the bride of Francis of Assisi. It tells the ageless story of crib and crucifix, birth and pain, in relation to the conditions of modern Africa, setting forth the mystery of the Madonna and Child against the background of the Bush.

RAYMOND GARLICK.

The British Film Industry Yearbook, edited by John Sullivan. (Film Press, 1948, 15s.).

This useful reference book, which is issued for the first time this year, contains lists of British feature films completed in 1947, with detailed credits, of British documentary films completed in 1947, of British studios and their personnel, of technicians, actors and actresses in British films. It also includes a classified directory of suppliers to production companies, a general trade directory, an alphabetical index of technicians and the text of the A.C.T. and B.F.P.A. agreement. Although some of the lists do not seem to be exhaustive, they are nevertheless useful, as they contain much information which is not to be found elsewhere. The book should be of particular interest to the trade.

Informational Film Year Book, 1948. (Edinburgh, Albyn Press, 1948) 12s. 6d.

This valuable reference book makes another welcome appearance in its second year of issue. As stated in the introduction, it is hoped that, with each succeeding year it will become an increasingly useful handbook for all who handle 35 mm. and 16 mm. informational film. Its usefulness

this year has certainly been increased (together with the price to the modest tune of 2s.), since the 1947 issue, although the latter has also proved to be of great service throughout the year. The value seems to lie primarily in its individual character: it is probably the only one of its kind available. As before, the reference section is preceded by articles by well known personalities in the informational film world. The reference section again contains many useful lists, including those of British informational films of the year, of informational film organisations, both in this country and abroad, film societies, producers, libraries, distributors and cine stockists. There are, in addition, several innovations, among which are a who's who in documentary and a good deal of information with regard to film strips.

Documentary 48, edited by Norman Wilson. (Edinburgh, Albyn Press, 1948, 2s. 6d.).

This pamphlet, published on the occasion of the Second International Festival of Documentary Films, August 22 to September 12 of this year, is also the second annual of its kind. It includes an article by Basil Wright on World Documentary, in which he defines the functions of the documentary film and gives a general survey of documentary film production in various countries. More detailed accounts are given by various other experts in the documentary field on the position of the documentary film in individual countries. There is also a review by Mary Losey of Flaherty's *Louisiana Story*, a film of which the World Premiere was given at the Edinburgh Festival.

Hamlet: the Film and the Play, edited by Alan Dent. (World Film Publications, 1948, 21s.).

This book, which seems to us the best so far from these publishers, includes a foreword by Sir Laurence Olivier, in which he discusses the various alterations, cuts and additions made to *Hamlet*, the play as Shakespeare wrote it, in making *Hamlet*, the film. This is followed by articles by Alan Dent, on text-editing Shakespeare, with special reference to and in defence of the editing of *Hamlet*, and including the text of the Play Scene as it is set down in the film script, and by Roger Furse, on designing the film. Finally there comes the complete text of Shakespeare's play, in which cuts that have been made by the text-editor are enclosed in red brackets and to which certain directions have been added. A full list of cast and credits is given. The book contains many beautiful reproductions of stills and of the designs of Roger Furse and, altogether is very well produced. (The pages are not numbered—one wonders, in passing, why).

Winchester's Screen Encyclopedia, edited by Maud M. Miller. (Winchester Publications, 1948, 21s.).

This encyclopedia covers a very wide field and the information contained in it is surprisingly detailed when one considers this. It comprises eight sections. The first includes articles on the film and the future, by Sir Alexander Korda, and

on quota legislation, by Sir Henry French, and lists are given of producers, distributors, exhibitors and laboratories. A second contains a comprehensive who's who in films, lists of screen writers' and actors' agents and of Academy Awards. A third section on stars and the public has an article on the Bernstein Questionnaire. Another section is devoted to the subject of film production and includes a list of five hundred famous films and their casts. There is a music section, which contains lists of notable music to be found in certain films and of British music of 1947. There are also sections on the documentary film, the specialised cinema and on children and the cinema, which last contains an article by Mary Field. This book should prove a useful work of reference to those engaged professionally in the film industry and also interesting reading matter to cinema enthusiasts in general. Some of the information is considerably out of date, but that is probably due to the time lag during publication. There are 80 illustrations of a type possibly more suited to some other form of literature than a serious reference book.

La Symphonie Pastorale; Les Dernières Vacances. Paris, La Nouvelle Édition, 1948. 50 francs each.

These two scenarios were issued as supplements to *La Monde Illustré Théâtral et Littéraire*. The first is adapted from the novel of André Gide, by J. Aurenche and J. Delannoy, the dialogue being by Pierre Bost and J. Aurenche, and the scenario and adaptation of the second are by Roger Leenhardt and the dialogue by Roger Leenhardt and Roger Breuil. They are published in pamphlet form and illustrated on the inner sides of the paper covers by reproductions of stills.

Raimu, ou la Vie de César: souvenirs sur L'illustre Comédien, by Paul Olivier. (Paris, Fournier-Valdes, 1947).

A native of Toulon, Raimu is described in this book as "un vieux parisien," for he knew his Paris like the back of his hand. We are given an account of his life and career there and in Provence, of his journeys, of his stage and screen friendships and of his untimely death. Henri Jeanson once wrote that among the most outstanding theatrical landmarks must be cited Sarah Bernhardt in *La Dame aux Camélias*, Mounet-Sully in *Oedipus Rex*, Coquelin in *Cyrano*, Lucien Guitry in *Samson*, Réjane in *Madame Sans-Gêne* and Raimu in *Marius*. Raimu certainly seems to be one of the great figures of stage and screen and one cannot perhaps help regretting that this book does not deal in rather greater detail with his actual work. However, it should be of interest for the light it sheds upon the life and character of what seems to have been a simple, pleasantly eccentric and popular personality. Many amusing anecdotes are included. The spectacle of Raimu, upon his departure from a football match at Toulon, followed by a vast crowd of 2,000 strong, while the Prince of Monaco, protected by a guard, left the stadium in solitary state, must have been unforgettable.

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